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The Fables of Aesop.

II.

88 Ak 17.

Ballantyne Press
BALLANTYNE, HANSON AND CO.
EDINBURGH AND LONDON

The Fables of Æsop

printed by William Caxton *in 1484*

those of Avian, Alfonso and Poggio,

now again edited and induced

by Joseph Jacobs.

II.

Text and Glossary.

BOMBAY B
JACKSO
MEMORI
COLLECTIO
ROYAL ASIATIC

Published by David Nutt in the Strand. M.D.CCCLXXXIX.

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Here begynneth the book

of the subtyl historyes and Fables

of Esope whiche were translated

out of Frensshe in to Englysshe

by william Caxton

At Westmynstre In the yere of oure Lorde .m. cccc.lxxxiij

¶ Here begynneth the preface or prologue of the fyrste book of Esope

Romulus ſon of thybere of the Cyte of Atyque / gretyng / Eſope man of grece / ſubtyll and Ingenyous / techeth in his fables how men ought to kepe and rewle them well / And to thende that he ſhold ſhewe the lyf and cuſtomes of al maner of men / he induceth the byrdes / the trees and the beeſtes ſpekynge to thende that the men may knowe wherfore the fables were found / In the whiche he hath wreton the malyce of the euylle people and the argument of the Improbes / He techeth alſo to be humble and ſo: to vſe wordes / And many other fayr Enſamples reherced and declared here after / the whiche I Romulus have tranſlated oute of grekes tongue in to latyn tongue / the whiche yf thou rede them / they ſhalle aguyſe and ſharpe thy wytte and ſhal gyue to the cauſe of Joye /

¶ The first fable is of the cock and of the precious ſtone/

As a Cok ones ſought his paſture in the donghylle/ he fond a precious ſtone/ to whome the Cok ſayd/ Ha a fayre ſtone and precious thow arte here in the fylth And yf he that deſyreth the had found the/ as I haue he wold haue take the vp/ and ſette the ageyne in thy fyrſt eſtate/ but in vayne I haue found the/ For no thynge I haue to do with the/ ne no good I may doo to the ne thou to me/ And thys fable ſayde Eſope to them that rede this book/ For by the cok is to vnderſtond the fool which retcheth not of ſapyence ne of wyſedome/ as the cok retcheth and ſetteth not by the precious ſtone/ And by the ſtone is to vnderſtond this fayre and playſaunt book

¶ This ſecond fable is of the wulf and the lambe /

Of the Innocent and of the ſhrewe Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / howe it was ſo / that the lambe and the wulf had bothe thurſt / and went both to a Ryuer for to drynke / ¶ It happed that the wulf dranke aboue & the lambe dranke bynethe / And as the wulf ſawe & percyued the lambe / he ſayd with a ryghe voys / Ha knaue why haſt thou troubled and

and fowled my water/ whiche I ſhold now drynke/ Allas my lord ſauf your grece/ For the water cometh fro yow toward me/ Thenne ſayd the wulf to the lambe/ Haſt thou no ſhame ne drede to curſe me/ And the lambe ſayd My lord with your leue/ And the wulf ſayd ageyne/ Hit is not ſyxe monethes paſſyd that thy fader dyd to me as moche/ And the lambe anſuerd yet was I not at that tyme born/ And the wulf ſaid ageyne to hym/ Thou haſt ete my fader/ And the lambe anſuerd/ I have no teeeth/ Thenne ſaid the wulf/ thou arte wel lyke thy fader/ and for his ſyne and myſdede thow ſhalt deye/ The wulf thenne toke the lambe and ete hym/ This fable ſheweth that the euylle man retcheth not by what maner he may robbe and deſtroye the good and Innocēt man.

¶ The thyrd fable is of the rat / and of the frogge /

Now it be ſo / that as the rat went in pylgremage / he came by a Ryuer / and demaunded helpe of a frogge for to paſſe / and go over the water / And thenne the frogge bound the rats foote to her foote / and thus ſwymed vnto the myddes ouer the Ryuer / And as they were there the frogge ſtood ſtylle / to thende that the rat ſhold be drowned / And in the meane whyle came a kyte vpon them / and bothe bare them with hym / This fable made Eſope for a ſymylytude whiche is prouffitable to many folkes / For he that thynketh evylle ageynſt good / the evil whiche he thynketh ſhall ones falle upon hym ſelf.

¶ The fourth fable is of the dogge and the ſheep

Of the men chalengynge / whiche ever be ſekynge occaſion to doo ſome harme and dommage to the good / ſaith Eſope ſuche a fable / Somtyme was a dogge / whiche demaunded of a ſheep a loof of brede that ſhe had borowed of hym / And the ſheep anſuerd that neuer ſhe had none of hym / The dogge made her to come before the Juge / And by cauſe the ſheep denyed the dette / the dogge provyſed and broughte with hym fals wytnes / that is to wete the wulf / the mylan & the ſpaehawk / And whanne theſe wytnes ſhold be examyned and herd / the wulf ſayd to the Juge / I am certayne & me remembreth wel / that the dogge lend to her a loof of brede / And the myllan went and ſayd / ſhe receyued hit preſente my perſone / And the ſperowhawk ſaid to the ſheep / come hyder why denyeſt thow that whiche thow haſt take and recyued / And thus was the poure ſheep vaynquyſſhed ¶ And thenne the Juge commaunded to her that ſhe ſhold paye the dogge / wherefore

wherfore ſhe ſold awey before the wynter her
fees and wulle for to paye that / that ſhe neuer
had / and thus was the poure ſheep deſpoylled /
In ſuche maner done the euylle hongry peple
which by theyr grete vntrouthe and malyce
robben and deſpoillen the poure folke

¶ The fyfthe fable is of the dogge and of the pyece of flessh

He that deſyreth to haue other mens goodes oft he loſeth his owne good / whereof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / In tyme paſſed was a dogge that wente ouer a brydge / and held in his mouthe a pyece of fleſſhe / and as he paſſed ouer a brydge / he perceywed and ſawe the ſhadowe of hym / and of his pyece of fleſſhe within the water / And he wenynge that it had be another pyece of fleſſhe / forthwith he thought to haue take it / And as he opened his mouthe / the pyece of fleſſhe fylle in to the water / and thus he loſt it / Ryghte ſoo is of many / for whanne they thynke to robbe other / they leſe theyr owne and propre good / wherfor for the loue of a vayn thynge men ought not to leue that whiche is certeyn.

¶ The .vj. fable is of the lyon and of the cowe / of the goote and of the ſheep

Men ſayen that it is not good to ete plommes with his lord / ne to the poure it is not good to have partage and dyuyſyon with hym which is ryche & myghty / wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / The cowe / the gote & the ſheep went ones a hūtyng & chaſe / with the lyon and toke a herte / And whanne they cake / [came] to haue theyr parte / the lyon ſayd to them / My lordes I late you wete / that the fyrſt part is myn by cauſe I am your lord / the ſecond by cauſe / I am ſtronger than ye be / the thyrd / by cauſe I ranne more ſwifter than ye dyd / and who ſo ever toucheth the fourthe parte / he ſhall be myn mortal enemy / And thus he took for hym ſelfe alone the herte / And therfore this fable techeth to al folk / that the poure ought not to hold felauſhip with the myghty / For the myghty man is neuer feythfull to the poure

¶ The ſeuenth fable is of the theef and of the ſonne.

NO man is chaunged by nature but of an euyll man maye wel yſſue and come a wers than hymſelf / wherof Eſope telleth ſuche a fable / A theef held the feeſt of his weddynge / And his neyghbours came there as the feſt was holden and worſhipped / and bare honour to the theef / And as a wyſe man ſawe that the neyghbours of this theef were ioyeful and glad / he ſayd to them / Ye make joye & gladnes of that / wherof ye ſholde wepe / take hede thenne to my wordes and vnderſtond your ioye / ¶ The ſonne wolde ones be maryed / But alle the Nacions of the world were ageynſt hym / & prayd Iupiter that he ſhold kepe the ſonne fro weddyng / & Jupiter demaũded of them the cauſe why they wolde not haue hym to be wedded / the one of them ſaid / Iupiter thou knoweſt wel / how ther is but one ſonne & yet he brenneth vs al / & yf he be maryed & haue ony children / they ſhal deſtroye al kynde / And this fable techeth vs that we ought not to be reioyſſhed of euyll felowſhip /

¶ The viij fable is of the wulf and of the crane

WHo ſo euer doth ony good to the euyll man he ſynneth as Eſope ſaith / for of ony good which is don to the euils cometh no prouffit / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / A wulf ete & deuoured a ſheep of whos bones he had one in his throte which he coulde not haue out & ſore it greued hym / thenne went the wulf & praid the crane that ſhe wold draw oute of his throte the bone / & the crane put her nek in to his throte & drewe out the bone wherby the wulf was hole / ¶ And the crane demaunded of hym to be payd of her ſalary ¶ And the wulf anſwerd to her / Thou arte well vnc̄onyng & no good connyng / remembryng the good that I haue done to the / for whan thou haddeſt thy neck within my throte / yf I had wold / I might haue ete the / and thus it appiezeth by the fable how no prouſitte cometh of ony good whiche is done to the euyle

¶ The ix fable is of the two bytches

It is not good to byleue what flaterers and euyll men ſaye / for by theyr ſwete wordes / they deceyue the good folke / whereof Eſope reherceth ſuch a fable / This was a bytche which wold lyttre and be delyuerd of her lytyl dogges / and came to the hows of another bytche / & prayd her by ſwete and fayre wordes that ſhe would lene to her a place for to lyttre her lytyll dogges / And this other lend to her / her bed and her hows wenynge to doo wel / And whan the bytche had lyttred her lytyl dogges / the good bytche ſayd to the other / that it was tyme that ſhe ſhold goo and departe oute of her hows And then the bytche and her young dogges ranne vpon the other / and boot and caſted her oute of her owne hows / and thus for to have doo well / grete dommage cometh ofte therfore And ofte the good men leſe theyr goodes by the decepcion and flaterye of the peruers and evylle folke /

¶ The tenthe fable is of the man and of the ſerpent

HE that leneth and helpeth the euylle men / ſynneth / for after that men have doo to them ſome good / they hurte them afterward / For as men ſayen comynly / yf ye kepe a man fro the galhows / he ſhalle neuer loue yow after / wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / ¶ A man was ſom tyme whiche fond a ſerpent within a Vyne / and for the grete wynter and froſt the ſerpent was hard / and almoſt dede for cold wherof the good man had pyte and toke and bare her in to his hows and leyd her before the fyre / and ſo moche he dyd that that ſhe came ageyne in to her ſtrengthe and vygour / She beganne thynne to crye and whyſtled about the hows and troubled the good wyf / and the children / wherfor this good man wold haue her oute of his hows / And whanne he thoughte to haue take her ſhe ſprange after his neck for to haue ſtrangled hym / And thus hit is of the euyll folk whiche for the good done to them / they yeld ageyne euyll and deceyuen them whiche haue had pyte on them / And alſo theyre felauſhip is not good ne vtyle /

¶ The xj fable is of the lyon and of the asse

OF them whiche mocken other eſo
reherceth ſuch a fable Ther w
an aſſe which met with a lyon
whom he ſaid my broder go
ſaue the & the lyon ſhaked hi
hede and with grete payne he myght hold hi
courage / to have forth with deuoured hym /
But the lyon ſayd to hym ſelf / It behoueth no
that teethe ſoo noble and ſo fayre as myn be
touchen not / ne byten ſuche a fowle beeſt / Fo
he that is wyſe muſt not hurte the foole ne take
hede to his wordes / but lete hym go for ſuche
as he is

¶ The xij fable is of the two rats

BEtter worthe is to lyue in pouerte ſurely / than to lyue rychely beyng euer in daunger / Wherof Eſope telleth ſuche a fable / There were two rats wherof the one was grete and fatte / and held hym in the celer of a Ryche man And the other was poure and lene / ¶ On a daye this grete and fat ratte wente to ſporte hym in the feldes and mette by the way the poure rat / of the whiche he was receyued as well as he coude in his poure cauerne or hole / and gaf from of ſuche mete as he had / Thenne ſayd the fatte ratte come thow wyth me / And I ſhalle gyue the wel other metes / He went with hym in to the toune / and enterd bothe into the celer of the ryche man / the whiche celer was full of alle goodes / And when they were within the grete rat preſented and gaf to the poure rat of the delycious metes / ſaying thus to hym / Be mery and make good chere / and ete and drynke Joyouſly / ¶ And as they were etynge / the bouteler of the place came in to the celer / & the grete rat fled anon in to his hole / &

& the poure rat wiſt not whyther he ſhold goo ne flee / But hyd hym behynd the dore with grete fere and drede / and the bouteler turned ageyne and ſawe hym not / And whan he was gone the fatte rat cam out of his caſerne or hole / and called the poure ratte / whiche yet was ſhakynge for fere / and ſaid to hym / come hyder and be not aferd / & ete as moche as thou wylt / And the poure rat ſayd to hym / for goddes loue lete me go oute of this celer / For I haue better ete ſome corne in the feldes and lyue ſurely / than to be ever in this torment / for thou arte here in grete doubte & lyueſt not ſurely / And therfore hit is good to lyue pourely & ſurely For the poure lyueth more ſurely than the ryche

¶ The xiij fable is of the Egle and of the fore

HOw the puyſſant & myghty muſt doubte the feble Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Ther was an Egle whiche came ther as young foxes were / and took awey one of them / and gaf hit to his younge Egles to fede them with The foxe wente after hym & praid hym to reſtore and gyue hym ageyne his yong foxe / and the Egle ſaid that he wold not / For he was ouer hym lord and maiſter / ¶ And thenne the foxe fulle of ſhrewdnes and malyce beganne to put to gyder grete habondaunce of ſtraws round aboute the tree / where vpon the egle and his yonge were in theyr neſt / and kyndeled it with fyre / ¶ And whan the ſmoke and the flambe began to ryſe vpward / the Egle ferdfulle and doubtyng the dethe of her lytylle egles reſtored ageyne the younge foxe to his moder ¶ This fable ſheweth vs / how the myghty men oughte not to lette in ony thynge the ſmall folke / For the lytyle ryght ofte may lette and trouble the grete

¶ The xiiij fable is of the Egle whiche bare a nutte in his becke and of the rauen

e that is ſure and wel garnyſſhed yet by fals counceyll may be betrayed / wherof Eſope telleth ſuche a fable / ¶ An Egle was ſomtyme vpon a tree / whiche held with his bylle a nutte / whiche he coulde not breke / the rauen came to hym / and ſayd / Thow ſhalt neuer breke it / tylle thow fleeſt as hyghe as thow mayſt / and thenne late it falle vpon the ſtones / And the Egle beganne to flyhe and lete fall his proye / and thus he loſt his notte / ¶ And thus many one ben deceyued thorughe fals counceylle / and by the fals tongue of other

¶ The xb fable is of the rauen and of the foxe

THey that be glad and Joyefull of the prayſynge of flaterers oftyme repente them therof / wherof Eſope reherceth to us ſuche a fable / A rauen whiche was vpon a tree / and held with his bylle a cheſe / the whiche cheſe the fox deſyred moche to haue / wherfore the foxe wente and preyſed hym by ſuche wordes as folowen / O gentyll rauen thow art the fayreſt byrd of alle other byrdes / For thy fethers ben ſo fayr ſo bright and ſo reſplendyſſhynge / and can alſo ſo wel ſynge / yf thow haddeſt the voys clere and ſmall thow ſholdeſt be the mooſt happy of al other byrdes / And the foole whiche herd the flateryringe wordes of the foxe beganne to open his bylle for to ſynge / And then the cheſe fylle to the grounde / and the fox toke and ete hit / And whan the rauen ſawe that for his vayn glorye he was deceyued wexed hevy and ſorowfull / and repented hym of that he had byleued the foxe / And this fable techeth vs / how men ought not to be glad ne take reioyſſhynge in the wordes of caytyf folke / ne alſo to leue flatery ne vayn glory

¶ The xbi fable is of the lyon / of the wylde bore / of the bole & of the aſſe

hanne a man hath loſt his dignyte or offyce / he muſte leue his fyrſt auducyte or hardyneſs / to thende / that he be not iniuryed and mocqued of euery one / wherof Eſope ſheweth vnto ſuche a fable / There was a lyon whiche in his yongthe was ſyers and moche outragyous / ¶ And when he was come to his old age / there came to hym a wyldbore / whiche with his teeth rent and barſt a grete pyece of his body and auenged upon hym of the wrong the lyon had doo to hym before that tyme / ¶ After came to hym the boole whiche ſmote and hurted hym with his hornes / And an aſſe came there / whiche ſmote hym in the forhede with his feete by maner of vyndycacion / And thenne the poure Lyon beganne to wepe ſayenge within hym ſelf in this manere / When I was yonge and uertuous euery one doubted and fered me / and now that I am old and feble / and nyghe to my dethe / none is that ſetteth ne holdeth ought by me / but of euery one I am ſetten aback / I haue loſt alle

alle good and worſhip / and therfore this fable admoneſteth many one whiche ben enhaunced jn dygnyte and worſhip ſhewinge to them / how they muſt be meke and humble / For he that geteth and acquyreth no frendes ought to be doubtous to falle in ſuche caas and in ſuche peryl

¶ The xvij fable is of the asse and of the yong dogge

None ought to entermete hym of that what he can not do wherof Esope recyted suche a fable / Of an asse whiche was in the hows of a lord / whiche lord had a lytyle dogge / whiche he loued wel / and gaf hym mete and ete vpon his table / And the lytyle dogge loked and chered / and lepte vpon his gowne / And to alle them that were in the hows he made chere / wherfor

wherfor the aſſe was enuyous and ſayd in hym ſelf / yf my lord and his meyny loue this myſchaunt beſte by cauſe that he chereth and maketh feſte to euery body / by gretter reaſon they ought to loue me vf I make chere to them / Thenne ſayd he in hym ſelf / Fro henforth I ſhall take my diſporte and ſhall make Joye and playe with my lord / and wyth his meyny / And ones as the aſſe was in this thoughte and ymagynacion / hit happed that he ſawe his lord whyche entryd in to his hows / the aſſe beganne thenne to daunſe and to make feeſt and ſonge with his ſwete voys / and approched hym ſelf toward his lord & went & lepte vpon his ſholders / and beganne to kyſſe and to lykke hym / The lord thenne beganne to crye oute with a hyghe voys and ſayd / lete this fowl and payllard / whiche hurteth and byteth me ſore / be bete and putt awey / The lordes ſeruauntes thenne toke anone grete ſtaues / and beganne to ſmyte vpon the poure aſſe / and ſo ſore corryged and bete hym / that after he had no luſte ne courage to daunſe / ne make to nonne chere ne feſte / and therfore none ought to entermete hym ſelf for to doo a thynge / whiche as for hym impoſſyble is to be done / For the vnwyſe diſpleſeth there / where as he ſuppoſeth to pleaſe

¶ The xviij fable is of the lyon and of the rat/

THe myghte and puyſſant muſt pardonne and forgyue to the lytyll and feble/ and ought to kepe hym fro al euylle/ For oftyme the lytyll may wel gyue ayde and help to the grete/ wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable Of a lyon whiche ſlepte in a foreſt and the rats deſported and playd aboute hym/ It happed that the rat wente vpon the lyon/ wherfore the lyon awoke/ and within his clawes or ongles he tooke the rat/ ¶ And whanne the rat ſawe hym thus taken & hold ſayd thus to the lyon/ My lord pardonne me/ For of my deth noughte ye ſhalle wynne/ For I ſuppoſed not to haue done to yow ony harme ne diſplayſyre/ ¶ Thenne thought the lyon in hym ſelf that no worſhip ne glorye it were to put it to dethe/ wherfor he graunted his pardonne and lete hym go within a lytyll whyle/ After this it happed ſo that the ſame lyon was take at a grete trappe/ and as he ſawe hym thus caught and taken/ he beganne to crye and make ſorowe/ and then whan the

rat

rat herd hym crye / he approched hym & demaunded of hym wherfor he cryed / And the lyon anſuerd to hym / Seeſt thou not how I am take & bound with this gynne / Thenne ſayd the ratte to hym / My lord I wylle not be vnkynde / but euer I ſhal remembre the grace whiche thou haſt done to me / And if I can I ſhall now helpe the / The ratte beganne thenne to byte the lace or cord / and ſo long he knawed it that the lace brake / And thus the lyon eſcaped / ¶ Therfore this fable techeth vs how that a man myghty and puyſſant ought not to dyſprayſe the lytyll / For ſomtyme he that can no body hurte ne lette may at a nede gyue help and ayde to the grete

¶ The xix fable is of the mylan whiche was ſeke and of his moder

HE that euer doth euylle ought not to ſuppoſe ne haue no truſt that his prayer at his nede ſhalle be herd / Of the whiche thynge Eſope ſheweth to us ſuche a fable / Of a mylan whiche was ſeke / ſo moche that he had no truſte to recouer his helthe / And as he ſawe hym ſo vexed with feblenes / he prayd his moder that ſhe ſhold praye vnto the goddes for hym / And his moder anſuerd to hym / My ſone thow haſt ſo gretely offendyd and blaſphemyd the goddes that now they wol auenge them on the / For thow preyeſt not them by pyte ne by loue / but for dolour and drede / For he whiche ledeth euylle lyf / and that in his euylle delynge is obſtynate / ought not to haue hope to be delyuered of his euyll / For whan one is fall into extremyte of his ſekenes / thenne is the tyme come that he muſt be payed of his Werkes and dedes / For he that offendeth other in his proſperyte / whan he falleth in to aduerſyte / he fyndeth no frendes /

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the ſwalowe / and other byrdes

E that by leueth not good counceyll / may not fayll to be euylle counceylled / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a plowgh man / whiche ſowed lynſeed / and the ſwalowe ſeyng that of the ſame lynſeed men myght make nettes and gynnes / wente and ſayd to al other byrdes / Come with me ye al & lete vs plucke vp al this / For yf we leue hit growe / the labourer ſhal mowe make therof gunnes and nettes for to take vs al / Alle the byrdes deſprayſed his counceyl / ¶ And thenne as the ſwalowe ſawe this / he wente and herberowed her in the plowgh mans hows / ¶ And whanne the flaxe was growen and pulled vp / the labourer made grynnes and nettes to take byrdes / wherwith he took euery day many other byrdes / and brought them to his hows / to the whiche byrdes the ſwalowe thenne ſayd / I told yow wel / what that ſhold happe therof / wherfore men ought not to deſprayſe good councylle / For he that is euyl aduyſed and not wel counceyled ſhalle haue moche payne

¶ Here fynyſſhed the fyrſt booke of Eſope /

¶ Here foloweth the prohemye of the second book of fables of esope / man wyse subtyle and Ingenyous

le maner of fables ben found for to ſhewe al maner of folk / what maner of thyng they ought to enſyewe and folowe / ¶ And alſo what maner of thyng they muſt and ought to leue and flee / for fable is as moche to ſeye in poeterye / as wordes in theologye / ¶ And therfor I ſhalle wryten fables for to ſhewe the good condycions of the good men / for the lawe hath be gyuen for the treſpacers or myſdoers / And by cauſe the good ond Juſte be not ſubget to the lawe as we fynde and rede of alle the Athenyens / the whiche lyued after the lawe of Kynde / And alſo they lyued at theyr lyberte / but by theyre wylle wold haue demaunded a kynge for to punyſſhe alle the euyll / but by cauſe they were not cuſtomed to be refourmed ne chaſtyſed / whan ony of them was corrected / and punyſſhed / they were gretely troubled / whan theyr newe kynge made Juſtyce / For by cauſe that before that tyme they had neuer

neuer be vnder no mans ſubjection / and was grete charge to them to be in ſeruytude / wherfore they were ſorowful that euer they had demaunded ony thynge / ageynſt the whiche eſope reherceth ſuche a fable whiche is the fyrſt and formeſt of this ſecond book

¶ The fyrst fable is of the frogges and of Jupyter

NO thyng is ſo good as to lyue Juſtly and at lyberte For fredome and lyberte is better than ony gold or ſyluer/ wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable/ There were frogges whiche were in dyches and pondes at theyre lyberte/ they alle to gyder of one aſſente & of one wylle maade a requeſt to Jupiter that he wold gyue them a kynge/ And Jupyter beganne

ganne therof to merueylle / And for theyr kyng he caſted to them a grete pyece of wood / whiche maade a grete ſowne and noyſe in the water / wherof alle the frogges had grete drede and fered moche / And after they approched to theyr kynge for to make obeyſſaunce vnto hym / ¶ And whanne they perceyued that hit was but a pyece of wood / they torned ageyne to Jupiter prayenge hym ſwetely that he wold gyue to them another kynge / And Jupiter gaf to them the Heron for to be theyr kynge / And then the Heron beganne to entre in to the water / and ete them one after other / And whanne the frogges ſawe that theyr kyng deſtroyed / and ete them thus / they beganne tendyrly to wepe / ſayeng in this manere to the god Jupiter / Ryght hyghe and ryght myghte god Jupiter pleaſe the to delyuere vs fro the throte of this dragon and fals tyraunt which eteth vs the one after another / And he ſayd to them / the kynge whiche ye haue demounded ſhalle be your mayſter / For whan men haue that / which men oughte to haue / they ought to be ioyful and glad And he that hath lyberte ought to kepe hit wel / For nothyng is better than lyberte / For lyberte ſhold not be wel ſold for alle the gold and ſyluer of all the world

¶ The ſecond fable is of the Columbes or douues of the kyte and of the ſperehawke

WHo that putte and ſubmytteth hym ſelf vnder the ſaue gard or protection of the euylle / thou oughteſt to wete & knowe / that whan he aſketh & demanded ayde & helpe / he geteth none / ¶ Wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of the douues whiche demaunded a ſperehawke for to be theyr kynge / for to kepe them fro the kyte or mylan / And whanne the ſperehawke was maade kynge ouer them / he beganne to deuoure them / the whiche columbes or douues ſayd amonge them / that better it were to them to ſuffre of the kyte than to be vnder the ſubjection of the ſperehawke / & to be martyred as we be / but therof we be wel worthy / For we oure ſelf ben cauſe of this meſchyef / And therfore whanne men done ony thyng / men ought well to loke and conſydere thende of hit / For he dothe prudently and wyſely whiche taketh good hede to the ende

¶ The thyrde fable is of the theef and of the dogge

Hanne that one gyueth ony thyng / men ought wel to take hede / to what ende hit is gyuen / wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of a theef which came on a nygt within a mans hows for to haue robbed hym / And the good mans dogge beganne to bark at hym / And thenne the theef caſted at hym a pyece of brede / And the dogge ſayd to hym / thow caſteſt not this brede for no good wylle / but only to the ende / that I hold my pees / to thende that thow mayſt robbe my mayſter / and therfore hit were not good for me / that for a morſell of brede / I ſhold leſe my lyf / wherfore goo fro hens / or els I ſhalle anone awake my mayſter and alle his meyne / The dogge theynne beganne to bark / and the theef beganne to flee / And thus by couetyſe many one haue oftyme receyued grete yeftes / the whiche haue been cauſe of theyr dethe and to leſe theyre heedes /

¶ Wherfore

¶ Wherfore hit is good to conſydere and loke wel / to what entencion the yeft in gyuen / to thende that none may be betrayd thurgh yeftes / ne that by ony yeftes none maketh ſome trayſon ageynſt his mayſter or lord

¶ The fourthe maketh mencyon of the fowe and of the wulf

IT is not good to byleue all ſuche thynges as men may here / wherof Eſope ſayeth ſuche a fable / Of a wulf whiche came toward a fowe whiche wepte and made ſorowe for the grete payne that ſhe felte / by cauſe ſhe wold make her young pygges / And the wulf came to her ſayeng / My ſuſter make thy yonge pygges ſurely / for ioyouſly and with good wylle / I ſhalle helpe & ſerue the / And the fowe ſayd thenne to hym / go forth on thy waye / for I haue no nede ne myſter of ſuche a ſeruaunt / For as longe as thow ſhalt ſtonde here I ſhal not delyuere me of my charge / For other thyng thou deſyreſt not / than to haue and ete them / The wulf then wente / and the fowe was anone delyuerd of her pygges / For yf ſhe had byleuyd hym ſhe had done a ſorowful byrthe / And thus he that folyſihly byleueth it happeth to hym

¶ The fyfthe fable maketh mencyon of the montayn whiche ſhoke

RYght ſo it happeth / that he that menaceth hath drede and is ferdful / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable Of a hylle whiche beganne to tremble and ſhake by cauſe of the molle whiche delued hit / And whanne the folke ſawe that the erthe beganne thus to ſhake / they were ſore aferd and dredeful / and durſt not wel come ne approche the hylle / But after whanne they were come nyghe to the montayne / & knewe how the molle cauſed this hylle ſhakynge / theyr doubte and drede were conuerted vnto Joye / and beganne alle to lawhe / And therfore men ought not to doubte al folk which ben of grete wordes and menaces / For ſome menacen that haue grete doubte

¶ The vi fable is of the wulf and of the lambe

He byrth cauſeth no ſo moche to gete ſome frendes / as doth the goodnes / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a wulf whiche ſawe a lambe among a grete herd of gootes / the whiche lambe ſowked a gote / And the wulf wente and ſayd to hym / this gote is not thy moder / goo and ſeke her at the Montayn / for ſhe ſhalle nouryſſhe the more ſwetely and more tendyrly than this gote ſhalle / And the lambe anſuerd to hym / This goote nouryſſheth me inſtede of my moder / For ſhe leneth to me her pappes ſoner than to ony of her own children / And yet more / hit is better for me to be here with theſe gootes than to departe fro hens / and to falle in to thy throte for to be deuoured / And therfore he is a foole whiche leueth fredome or ſurete / For to put hym ſelf in grete perylle and daunger of dethe / For better is to lyue ſurely and rudely in ſewrte than ſwetely in peryll & daunger

¶ The bii fable ſpeketh of the old dogge and of his mayster

MEn ought not to dyſprayſe the auncyent ne to putte a bak / For yf thow be yonge / thow oughte to deſyre to come to old age or auncyente / and alſo thow ouȝteſt to loue and prayſe the fayttes or dedes whiche they haue done in theyr yongthe / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a lord whiche had a dogge / the whiche dogge had be in his yonghe of good kynde / For ye wote wel / that of kynde the dogges chacen and hunten in theyr yongthe / and haue grete luſte to renne and take the wyld beeſtes / whan thenne this dogge was come to old age / and that he myght no more renne / It happeth ones that he lete ſcape and go fro hym an hare / wherfore his mayſter was ſorowfull and angry / and by grete wrathe beganne to bete hym / The dogge ſayd thenne to hym / My mayſter / of good ſeruyſe thow yeldeſt to me euylle gwerdone & reward / For in my yonge age I ſerued the ful wel / And now that I am comen to myn old age / thow beteſt and ſetteſt me

me a bak / haue memorye how in myn yong age / I was ſtronge and luſty / And how I made grete outtrages and effors / the whiche cauſed my yongthe / And now when I am bycome old and feble thow ſetteſt nought of me / ¶ This fable techeth that who ſo euer doth ony good in his yongthe / in his auncyente and old age he ſhalle not contynue in the vertues which he poſſeded in his yong age

¶ The viij fable is of the hares and of the frogges

MEn ſay conynly that after that the tyme goth / ſo muſt folke go / For yf thow makeſt deſtinction of the tyme thow ſhalt wel accord the Scryptures / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / And ſayth thus / that he whiche beholdeth the euylle of other / muſt haue pacyence of the euylle that maye come vpon hym / For ſomtyme as a hunter chaced thurgh the feldes and woodes / the hares beganne to flee for fere And as they ranne / they adreſſyd them in to a medowe fulle of frogges / ¶ And whanne the frogges herd the hares renne they beganne alſo to flee and to renne faſt / And thenne a hare whiche perceyued them ſo ferdfull ſayd to alle his felawes / Lete us no more be dredeful ne doubtuous / for we be not alone that haue had drede / For alle the frogges ben in doubte / and haue fere and drede as we haue / Therfore we ought not to deſpayre / but haue truſt and hope to lyue / And yf ſomme aduerſyte cometh vpon us / we muſt bere it pacyently / For ones the tyme

tyme ſhalle come that we ſhalle be oute of payne and oute of all drede / Therfore in the vnhappy and Infortunat tyme men ought not to be deſpayred / but oughte euer to be in good hope to haue ones better in tyme of proſperyte / For after grete werre cometh good pees / And after the rayne cometh the fair weder

¶ The ix fable maketh mencyon of the wulf and of the kydde

GOod Children ought to obſeruc and kepe euer the comaundements of theyr good parents and frendes / wherof Eſope reciteth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a gote whiche had made her yonge kyde / and honger toke her ſoo that ſhe wold haue gone to the feldes for to ete ſome graſſe / wherfore ſhe ſayd to her kyd / My child / beware wel / that yf the wulf come hyder to ete the / that thou opene not the dore to hym ¶ And whanne the gote was gone to the feldes / came the wulf to the dore / And faynynge the gotes voyce ſayd to the kydde / My child opene to me the dore / And thenne the kydde anſuerd to hym / goo hens euylle and fals beſte / For well I ſee the thurgh that hole / But for to haue me thow fayneſt the voyce of my moder / ¶ And therfore I ſhalle kepe me well fro openynge of ony dore of this hows / And thus the good children ought euer to kepe wel / and put in theyr hert & memory the doctryne and the techyng of theyr parentes / For many one is vndone and loſt for faulte of obedyence

¶ The tenthe fable is of the good man and of the ſerpente

HE that ought not to be aſſewerd that applyketh and ſetteth hym to doo ſomme other eny euyll / wherof eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of a ſerpent / whiche wente & came into the hows of a poure man / which ſerpent lyued of that whiche felle fro the poure mans table / For the whiche thynge happed a grete fortune to this poure man and bycame moche ryche / But on a daye this man was angry ageynſte the ſerpent / and took a grete ſtaf / and ſmote at hym / and gretely hurted him / wherfore the ſerpente wente oute of his hous And therin he came neuer ageyne / And within a lytyll whyle after this / this man retourned and felle ageyne in to grete pouerte / And thenne he knewe that by the fortune of the Serpent he was bycome ryche / and repented hym moche of that he ſmote the ſerpent / And thenne this poure man wente and hũbled hym before the ſerpent ſayenge to hym / I praye the that thow wylt pardonne me of thoffenſe that I have done to the /

¶ And

¶ And thenne ſayd the ſerpente to the poure man / Syth thow repenteſt the of thy myſdede / I pardonne and forgyue it to the / But as longe as I ſhalle be on lyue / I ſhalle remember me of thy malyce / For as thow hurteſt me ones / thow maeſt as wel hurte me another tyme / For the wounde that thow madeſt to me / may not forgete the euylle whiche thow haſt done to me wherfore he that was ones euylle / ſhalle euer be preſumed & holden for euylle / And therfore men ought to preſume ouer hym / by whome they receyue ſomme dommage and not haue ſuſpecte theyr good and trewe frendes

¶ The xi fable is of the herte / of the fheep & of the wulf

THe thynge which is promyſed by force & for drede is not to be hold / wherof eſope reherceth ſuche a fable of a hert which in the preſence of a wulf demaaded of a ſheep that ſhe ſhold paye a buſſhel of corn / And the wulf commaaded to the ſheep to paye hit / And whanne the day of payment was come the herte came and demaunded of the ſheep his corn And the ſheep ſayd to hym / the conenaunces and pactyons made by drede and force oughte not to be holden / For it was force to me beynge to fore the wulf to promytte & graunte to gyue to the that whiche thou neuer leneſt to me / And therfor thow ſhalt haue ryght nought of me / wherfore ſomtyme it is good to make promiſſe of ſome thynge for to eſchewe gretter dommage or loſſe / For the thyngs whiche are done by force haue none fydelyte

¶ The xij fable is of the balled man / and of the flye /

OF a lytyl euylle may wel come a gretter / Wherof Eſope reherſeth ſuche a fable / Of a flye / whiche pryked a man vpon his bald hede / And whanne he wold have ſmyte her / ſhe flewgh awey / And thus he ſmote hym ſelf / wherof the fly beganne to lawhe / And the bald man ſayd to her / Ha a euylle beeſt thow demaundeſt wel thy dethe / yf I ſmote my ſelf wherof thow lawheſt and mocqueſt me / But yf I had hytte the / thow haddeſt be therof ſlayne / And therfore men ſayen comynly that of the euylle of other / men ought not to lawhe ne ſcorne / But the Iniuryous mocquen and ſcornen the world / and geteth many enemyes / For the whiche cauſe oftyme it happeth that of a fewe wordes euyll ſette / cometh a grete noyſe and daunger

¶ The xiij fable is of the foxe and of the ſtorke

THow oughteſt not to doo to other that whiche thow woldeſt not that men ſhold doo to the/ wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable/ Of a foxe whiche conueyed a ſtorke to ſouper/ And the foxe put the mete vpon a trauncher/ the whiche mete the ſtorke myght not ete/ wherof ſhe tooke & had grete diſplayſaunce/ & wente & departed oute of the foxes

foxes hows al hungry and wente geyne to her lodgys / and by cauſe that the foxe had thus begyled her / ſhe bythoughte in her ſelf / how ſhe myght begyle the Foxe / For as men ſaye / it is meryte to begyle the begylers / wherfore the ſtorke prayd the foxe to come and ſoupe with her / and put his mete within a glas / And whanne the foxe wold haue eten / he myght not come ther by / but only he lycked the glas / by cauſe he cowde not reche to the mete with his mouthe / And thenne he knewe wel that he was deceyued / And thenne the ſtorke ſayd to hym / Take of ſuche goodes as thow gaueſt to me / And the poure foxe ryght ſhameful departed fro thens / And with the ſtaf whiche he had made he was bete And therfore he that begyleth other / is oftyme begyled hym ſelf /

¶ The xiiij fable is of the wulf and of the dede mans hede

Any one ben whiche haue grete worſhip and glorye / but noo prudence / ne noo Wyſedom they haue in them wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of a wulf which found a dede mans hede / the whiche he torned vp ſo doune with his foote / And ſayd / Ha a how fayr haſt thow be and playſaunt / And now thow haſt in the neyther wytte / ne beaute / & yet thow arte withoute voys and withoute ony thought / and therfore men ought not only to behold the beautte and fayreneſſe of the body / but only the goo[illegible]es of the courage / For ſomtyme men gyuen glorye and worſhip to ſome / whiche haue not deſeruyd to haue hit /

¶ The xv fable is of the Jaye and of the pecok

One ought to were and putte on hym the gowne of other / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable Of a Jaye full of vayne glory / whiche tooke and putte on hym the fethers of a pecok / and with them he a[d]ourned / and arayed hym ſelf well / And whanne he was wel dreſſyd and arayed / by his oultrecuydaunce or ouerwenynge wold haue gone and conuerſed amonge the pecoks / and deſprayſed alle his felawes / And whanne the pecokes knewe that he was not of theyr kynd / they anone plucked of alle his fethers / and ſmote and bete hym by ſuche maner / that no fethers abode vpon hym / And he fledde away al naked and bare /

¶ And thenne whanne his felawes ſawe hym / they ſayd to hym / What gallaunt come hyther / where ben thy fayre fethers / whiche thow haddeſt but late a gone / Haſt thow no ſhame ne vergoyne to come in oure companye /

And thenne alle the byrdes cam vpon hym / and ſmote & bete hym / ſayenge thus to hym /

yf

yf thou haddeſt be content of thyn owne veſty-mentes / thow hadeſt not come to this vylony / Ther for hit appereth that hit is not good to were another mans gowne / For ſuche weren fayre gownes and fayr gyrdels of gold that haue theyr teeth cold at home

¶ The xvj fable is of the mule and of the flye.

Omme maken grete menaces / whiche haue no myghte / ¶ Whe of Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / ¶ Of a carter / whiche ladde a Charyot or carte / whiche a Mule drewe forthe / And by cauſe the Mule wente not faſt ynough / the flye ſayd to the Mule / Ha a payllart Mule / why gooſt thow not faſter / I ſhalle ſoo egrely pryke the / that I ſhalle make the go lyghtely / ¶ And the Mule anſwered to the flye / God kepe and preſerue the mone for the wolues / For I haue ne grete drede ne fere of the / But I drede and doubte ſore my mayſter / whiche is vpon me / whiche conſtrayneth me to fulfylle his wylle / ¶ And more I oughte to drede and doubte hym more / than the / whiche arte nought / and of no valewe ne myght / ¶ And thus men ought not to gette by ne double them / whiche haue no myght ne that ben of no valewe

¶ The xbij table is of the ante and the flye.

TO make booſt and auauntynge is but vayne glorye and folye / wherof Eſope recyteth ſuche a fable / Of the ante or formyce and of the flye / whiche ſtryued to gyder / for to wete whiche was the moſt noble of them bothe / & the flye ſayd to the formyce / Come hyder formyce / wylt thow compare thy ſelf to me that dwelle in the kynges places and palays / and ete and drynke at theyr table / And alſo I kyſſe bothe kynge and quene / and the moſt fayre maydens / and thow poure and myſchaunt beeſt thow arte euer within the erthe / And the formyce anſuerd to the flye / Now knowe I wel thy vanyte and folye / ¶ For thow auaunteſt the of that wherof thou ſholeſt deſpraiſe the /

For fro alle places where as thow gooſt or flyeſt / thow arte hated chaced and put oute / and lyueſt in grete daunger / for aſſone as the wynter ſhalle come thow ſhalt deye / And I ſhal abyde on lyue alone within my chamber or hole / where as I drynke and ete at my playſyr / For the

the wynter ſhalle not forgyue to the thy myſ-dede / but he ſhalle flee the / ¶ And thus he that wylle mocque or deſpreyſe ſomme other / he ougt fyrſt to loke and behold on hym ſelf wel / For men fayn comynly / who that be-holdeth in the glas / well he ſeeth hym ſelf / ¶ And who ſeeth hym ſelf / wel he know-eth hym ſelf / And who that knowith hym ſelf / lytel he preyſeth hym ſelf / ¶ And who that preyſeth hym ſelf lytyll / he is ful wyſe and ſage.

¶ The xviij fable is of the wulf / of the foxe / and of the ape

HE that ones falleth in to ſomme euylle faytte or dede / he ſhalle euer lyue with deſhonour and in ſuſpecion / of the peple / ¶ And how be it that by aduenture he purpoſed to doo ſomme prouffitable thynge to ſomme other / yet he ſhold not be truſted ne byleued / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a wulf whiche maade the foxe to be cyted before the Ape / ¶ And the wulf ſayd that the foxe was but a theef and a payllart and a knaue of poure folke / And the foxe ſayd that he lyed / and that he was a good and trewe man / And that he dyde moche good /

¶ And thenne the Ape whiche was ſette as a Juge / gaf ſuche a ſentence / and ſayd to the wulf / Come hyther / thow haſt not loſt al that whiche thow demaundeſt / ¶ And thow Foxe I beleue wel that thow haſt vſurped and robbed ſom thynge / howe be it / that thow denyeſt hit in Juſtyce / But for as moche that pees may be bytwexe yow bothe / ye ſhalle parte to gyder your

your good / to thende / that none of yow haue no hole parte / For he, that is wonte and acuſtomed to robbe and gnawe / with grete payne he may abſteyne hym ſelf fro hit / For a begyler wylle euer begyle other / ¶ And by cauſe that the ape felte them bothe gulty and ſuſpycious made theyr dyfference to be acorded / and parted half by half / For they that ben cuſtomed to doo ony frawde or falſhede / ſhall euer lyue rygte heuyly and in ſuſpycon

¶ The xix fable is of the man and of the wesel

MEn ought wel to loke and behold the courage & thought of hym / whiche dothe good / and the ende / wherfor he dothe hit / wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of a man whiche tooke a weſell / the whiche chaced after the rattes wythynne his hows / ¶ And after whanne he had taken her / he wold haue kylled her / ¶ And whanne the poure Weſelle ſawe the wrathe and furour of her mayſter / ſhe cryed to hym / mercy / ſayenge thus / My lord I requyre and praye the / that thow wylt pardonne to me / and that thow wylt reward me of the grete ſeruyſe whiche I haue done to the / For euer I haue chaced the rats oute of thy hows /

¶ And the man ſayd to her / thow dydeſt not that for the loue of me / but only thow haſt done it for to fylle thy bely For yf thow haddeſt done it for the loue of me / I ſhold haue pardonned to the / ¶ And by cauſe that thow dydeſt not for to ſerue me / but for to lette and adomage me / For that the rattes myght not ete / thou bareſt

it

it awey / And ſoo bycauſe / that thow arte wexed fatte of myne owne brede / thow muſt rendre and geue to me alle the fatneſſe / whiche thou haſt conquered and goten here / For he that robbeth ſhall be robbed / Juxta illud / pellatores pillabuntur / For hit ſuffyſeth not to doo wel / but men muſt haue good wylle and good entencion for to do hit / For an almeſſe that is done for vayne glorye / is not merited / but diſmeryted / wherfore I ſhal not pardonne the / but incontynent and withoute taryenge thow ſhalt deye / For by cauſe that thow haſt deſeruyd no mercy / thow ſhalt now be putte to dethe

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the Oxe / and of the frogge / whiche wold haue compared her to hym

THe poure ought not to compare hym ſelf to hym which is ryche and myghty / As ſayth this fable of a frogge / whiche was in a medowe / when ſhe aſpyed and ſawe an oxe whiche paſtured / She wold make her ſelf as grete and as myghty as the oxe / and by her grete pryde ſhe beganne to ſwelle ageynſte the oxe / And denaunded of his children yf ſhe was not as grete as the oxe and as myghty / And theyr children anſuerd and ſayd nay moder / For to loke and behold on the oxe / it ſemeth of yow to be nothynge / And thenne the frogge beganne more to ſwelle / ¶ And when the oxe ſawe her pryde / he thradde and threſted her with his fote / and brake her bely / Therfore hit is not good to the poure to compare hym ſelf to the ryche / Wherfore men ſayn comynly / Swelle not thy ſelf / to thende that thow breſte not

¶ Here fynyſſhed the ſecond booke of Eſope /

¶ Here begyneth the thyrdde booke of the ſubtyle fables of Eſope / whereof the fyrſte maketh mencion / of the lyon / & of the paſtour or herdman

THe myghty and puyſſant oughte not to be ſlowfull of the benefetes done to them by the lytyl and ſmalle And oughte not alſo to forgete them / but that they may be rewarded of them / ¶ And this fable approueth eſope & ſhoweth vnto vs / of a lyon whiche ranne after a beeſt / and as he ranne / a thorne entred into his foote / whiche hurted and greued hym gretely / wherfore he mught no ferther goo / but as wel as he cowde he came to a ſhepeherd whiche kepte his ſheep and beganne to flatere with his taylle ſhewynge to hym hys foote / whiche was ſore hurted and wounded / The ſhepherd was in grete drede and caſted before the lyon one of his ſheep / But the lyon demaunded no mete of hym / For more he deſyred to be medycyned and made hole of his foote / ¶ And after whenne the ſhepherde ſawe the wounde / he with

with a nydle ſubtylly drewe oute of his foote the thorne / and had oute of the wound alle the roten fleſſhe / and enoynted hit with ſwete oyne-ments / ¶ And anone the lyon was hole / And for to haue rendryd graces and thankys to the ſhepherd or paſtour the lyon kyſſed his handes / And after he retorned ageyn in to the hyeſt of the woode / And within a lytel whyle after it happed that this lyon was taken and conueyed to the Cyte of Rome and was put amonge the other beeſtes for to deuoure the myſdoers / Now it befelle that the ſayd ſhepherd commyſed a crymynous dede / wherfore he was condempned to be deuoured by theſe beſtes / And ryght ſo as he was caſt among them the lyon knewe hym / and beganne to behold on hym / and made to hym chere and lykked hym with his tongue / And preſerued and kepte hym from alle the other beſtes / Thenne knewe the ſhepherd that it was the lyon whiche he maade hole / And that he wold thenne haue recompenſed hym of the good whiche he had done to hym / wherof alle the Romayns were all wonderly abaſſhed / And wold knowe the cauſe of hit And the ſheepherd ſayd to them as aboue is ſayd / ¶ And whanne they knewe the cauſe / they gaf leue to the ſheepherd / to goo home and ſente ageyne the lyon in to the foreſt / And

therfore

therfore this is notary and trewe that al maner of folke ought to rendre and gyue thankynges grace and mercye to theyr good doers/ For flowfulnes is a ſynne/ whiche is moche diſplay-ſaunt to god

¶ The ſecond fable is of the lyon and of the hors

Che one ought to eſchewe dyſſymylyng / for none ouȝt to were on hym the ſkyn of the wulf / but that he wyll be lyke to hym / For none ought to fayne hym ſelf other than ſuche as he is / As to vs reherceth this fable / ¶ Of a lyon whiche ſawe a hors / whiche ete graſſe in a medowe / And for to fynde ſomme ſubtylyte and manere for to ete and deuoure hym approched to hym / and ſayd / God kepe the my broder / I am a leche / and with al a good pheſycyen / ¶ And by cauſe that I ſee that thow haſt a ſore foote / I am come hyther for to hele the of hit / And the hors knewe wel all his enyell thought And ſayd to the lyon / My broder I thanke the gretely / and thow arte welcome to me / I preye the that thow wylt make my foote hole / And thenne the lyon ſayd to the hors / late ſee thy foote / And as the lyon looked on hit / the hors ſmote hym on the forhede / In ſuche wyſe that he brake his hede and fyll oute of his mynde / & the lyon felle to the ground / and ſoo wonderly he was hurte / that almoſt

almoſt he myght not ryſe vp ageyne / And thenne ſayd the lyon in hym ſelf / I am wel worthy to haue had this / For he that ſercheth euylle / euyll cometh to hym / And by cauſe that I dyſſymyled and fayned my ſelf to be a medycyn / where as I ſhold haue ſhewed myſel a grete enemye / I therfore haue receyued good reward / and therfore euery body oughte to ſhewe hym ſelf ſuche as he is /

¶ The thyrd fable maketh mencion of the asse / of the hors / & of theyr fortune

HE that is wel fortuned and happy / and is atte vppereſt of the whele of fortune / may wel falle doune / And therfore none oughte to deſpyſe the poure / but oughte to thynke how the whele of fortune is moche doubtous as ſhewethe this preſent fable / Of a fayr hors whiche was wel harnayſed and arayed / and his ſadel and brydel garnyſſhed with gold / whiche hors mete with an aſſe ſore laden in a narowe way / And by cauſe that the aſſe tourned hym not a bak Incontynent the hors ſayd to hym / Ha a chorle haſt thow noo ſhame ne vergoyne / that thow doſte ne bereſt none worſhippe ne reuerence vnto thy lord / who holdeth now me / that wyth my foote I breke not thyn hede / by cauſe that thow putteſt not thy ſelf aſyde and oute of my waye / ſo that I myght [illegible]le & goo on my waye / The poure aſſe anſuerd ne ſayd to hym neuer a word / and was ſore aferd that the horſe ſhold haue bete hym / wherfore

fore he held his pees as wyſe and ſage / And the hors wente his waye / ¶ And within a lytyl whyl after / it befelle / that fortune tourned his whele vp ſodoune / For thys fayre hors became old lene and ſeke / ¶ And whanne his mayſter ſawe that his hors was thus lene and ſeke and oute of proſperyte / he comaũded that he ſhold be had in to the toun and that in ſtede of his ryche ſadel men ſhold put and ſette on his backe a panyer for to bere dounge in to the feldes / Now it happed that the aſſe whiche was in a medowe etyng graſſe perceyued and ſawe the hors and wel knewe hym / wherof he was wonder abaſſhed / and merueylled moche that he was thus poure and ſo lene bycome / ¶ And the aſſe went toward hym and ſayd / Ha a felawe. where is now thy fayre ſadel / and thy ryche brydel / garnyſſhed with gold / how arte thow now bycome ſoo lene and ſuche a payllard / what haue prouffyted to the thy fayre and ryche rayments / and what auaylled now ſo thy grete ſyerſte and pryde / and thy grete preiumpcion whiche ones thow ſheweſt to me / Thynke now / how thow arte lene and vnthryfty / and how thow and I ben now of one offyce / And the myſerable and vnhappy hors was abaſſhed / and for ſhame loked dounward / & anſuerd neuer one word / for alle his felicitie was thenne

turned

turned into aduerſyte / ¶ And therfore they that ben in felycite / oughte not to dyſprayſe them / whiche ben in aduerſyte / For many one I knewe ryche and myghty / whiche are now poure

¶ The iiij fable maketh mencyon of the beestes and of the birdes

NOne maye do no good to two lordes at ones / whiche ben cõtrary one to that other / as ſayth to vs this fable that the beeſtes made grete werre ageynſt the byrdes / & fought euery day to gyder / And the backe feryng the wulues And that the beeſtes ſhold vaynquyſſhe and ouercome the byrdes / wold haue hold with the beeſtes / and be ageynſt the byrdes / And whanne the batylle was ordeyned on bothe ſydes / the egle beganne to entre in to the batayll of the beeſtes by ſuche a ſtrengthe / that with the help of the other byrdes he gat the feld / and vaynquyſſhed / and ouercame the beſtes / wherfor the beſtes maade pees with the byrdes / and were alle of one accord and of one wylle / And for the treaſon that the backe had made / ſhe was condempned to neuer ſee the day / And neuer flee / but only by nyght / And alſo ſhe was deſpoylled of alle her fethers / And therfore he that wylle ſerue two lordes cõtrary one to other may-not be good ne trewe / And they wheche

relynquen

relynquen and leue theyr owne lordes for to ſerue another ſtraunger / whiche is enemy to theyr lord / ben wel worthy to be punyſſhed / For as the Euangele ſayth / None may ſerue bothe god and the deuyl

¶ The .v. fable is of the nyghtyngale and of the ſperehawke

E that oppreſſeth the Innocents ſhalle haue an euyl ende / wherof Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a ſperehawk / whiche dyd put hym within the neſt of a nyghtyngale / where he fond the lytyl and yonge byrdes / the nyghtyngale came and perceyued hym / wherfore ſhe praed the ſperehawke / ſayeng / I requyre and praye the as moche as I may / that thow haue pyte on my ſmal byrdes / And the ſperehawke anſuerd and ſayd / yf thow wylt that I graunte the thy requeſt / thow muſt ſynge ſwetely after my wylle and gree And thenne the nyghtyngale beganne to ſynge ſwetely / not with the herte / but with the throte onely / For he was ſo fulled with ſorowe that otherwyſe he myght not doo / The ſperehawk ſayd thenne to the nyghtyngale / This ſonge playſeth me not / And toke one of the yonge byrdes and deuoured hit / And as the ſayd ſperehawke would haue deuoured and eten the other came there a hunter whiche dyd caſte a

grete

grete nette vpon the ſperehawk / And whanne ſhe wold haue fleen awey / he myght not / for he was taken / And therfore he that doth harme & lẽtteth the Innocents / is worthy to deye of euylle dethe / As Caym dyd whiche ſlewe his broder Abel

¶ The ſeuenth fable is of the foxe and of the wulf

FOrtune helpeth bothe the good and euylle folke / and to alle them / whiche ſhe helpeth not ſhe ſendeth euylle to them / And they that ſetten alle theyr malyce ageynſte fortune ben ſubuertyſed and ouerthrawen by her / wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of a wulf whiche had aſſembled to gyder a grete proye / or moche mete for to haue lyued more delycyouſly / wherof the foxe had grete anuye / and for to haue robbed ſomme of this good / he came vnto the cauerne or hole where as this proye or mete was in / and ſayd to the wulf / My godſep the wulf / by cauſe hit is longe ſyth I ſawe the / I am in grete heuyneſſe and ſorowe / and alſo by cauſe we haue not been in longtyme gone chaced and gone to gyder / ¶ And whan the wulf knewe the malyce of the foxe / he ſayd to hym thow arte not come hyder for to ſee me / ne how I fare / but thou arte come for to robbe and rauyſſhe my good / For the whiche wordes the foxe was moche angry / and wente toward a ſheepherd /

ſheepherd / to whome he ſayd / yf thow wylt be auenged of the wulf whiche is enemy of thy heerd or parke / on this day I ſhalle put hym under thy handes / And the ſhepherd auſuerede to the foxe in this manere / yf thow doo as thow ſayſt / I ſhall paye the wel / And thenne the foxe ſhewed to hym the hool / wherin the wulf was / And the ſhepherd Incontynent wente toward the hole / and with a ſpere he kyld the wulf / And by this manere the foxe was wel fylled and refreſſhyed of the good of the other / but as he returned home ward / he was tuke and deuoured by ſomme dogges / wherfore he ſayd to hym ſelf / by cauſe that ryght euylle I haue done / euylle cometh thow to me / For ſynne retorneth euer vpon his mayſter / And he that lyueth but of rauyn and robberye ſhal at the laſt be knowen and robbed /

¶ The ſeuenth fable is of the herte and of the hunter

MEn preyſen ſomtyme that / that ſhold be blamed & vitupered / And ofte men blamen & vytuperen that / that ſhold be preyſed / as reciteth to vs this fable of a herte / To whome it happyd on a tyme that he drank in a fonteyn or welle as he dranke / he ſawe in the water his hede which was horned / wherfore he preyſed moche his hornes / And as he loked on his legges / whiche were lene and ſmal / he deſpreyſed and vytupered them / And as he was drynkynge in the fontayne he herd the voys and barkynge of dogges / wherfore he wold haue fledde awey in to the foreſt for to ſaue hym ſelf / but as he ſawe the dogges ſo nyghe hym he wold haue entred within a buſſhe / but he myght not / for his hornes kepte hym withoute / And thenne ſeyng that he myght not eſcape began to ſaye within hym ſelf / I haue blamed and vytupered my legges / whiche haue ben to me vtyle and prouffitable / and haue preyſed my hornes / whiche ben now

cauſe

cauſe of my dethe / And therfore men ought to deſprayſe that thynge / whiche is vnprouffitable / and preyſe that whiche is vtyle and prouffitable / And they ought to preyſe and loue the chirche and the commaundements of the ſame / the whiche ben moche vtyle & prouffytable / And deſpreyſe and flee al ſynne and vyce / whiche ben inutyle harmeful and dommageable

¶ The viij fable maketh mencion of Juno / of Venus / and of the other wymmen

BEfore the goddes and the goddeſſes men muſte euer preyſe chaſtyte / for it is a worſhipful & an honeſt thyng to a woman to hold hyr contente with a man alone / but Venus for her deſporte & for to dryue aweye the tyme / wold Interprete the ſayenge of the hennes / wherfore ſhe demaunded a henne whiche was in her hows / but at this tyme I ſhal kepe my tongue / and no ferther I ſhalle ſpeke therof / For many wyſe men whiche haue ſene and redde alle this book vnderſtanden wel alle the nature of hit / and by cauſe it is lycyte & honeſt / And that we alle ben bounden to kepe the ladyes in theyre worſhip and honour / alſo that in euery place where hit ſhalle be poſſyble to vs we ought to preyſe them / We ſhalle now ceſſe to enquere ferther of this matere / and hiſtoryye / whiche we ſhall leue in latyn for the grete clerkes / & in eſpecial for them that wylle occupye theyr tyme to judge and rede the gloſe of the ſayd Eſope

¶ The nynthe fable is of the knyght and of the wydowe

THe woman whiche lyueth in this world without reproche or blame is worthely to be gretely preyſed / Wherof Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable of a man and of a woman / whiche loued moche eche other / It happed thenne by the effors of Atropos or dethe / the whiche we al muſt ſuffer that the ſayd man deyde / And as men wold haue borne hym in to his graue / whiche was withoute the toune there to be buryed / his wyf made grete ſorowe and wepte pyteouſly / And whanne he was buryed / ſhe wold abyde ſtylle vpon the graue / and lete do make a lytyll lodge or hows therupon / and oute of this lodge ſhe wold neuer departe for no prayer ne fayr word / neyther for ony yeftes ne for menaces of her parents Now it befell in the toun that a myſdoer was condampned to be hanged / ¶ And to thende that he ſhold not be taken fro the gallows / hit was thenne commaunded that a knyght ſhold kepe hym / And as the knyght kepte hym / grete thurſte took hym / And as he perceyued the lodge of

of the ſayd woman he wente to her / and prayd her to gyue hym ſomme drynke / And ſhe with good herte gaf hym to drynke / And the knyght dranke with grete appetyte / as he that had grete thurſte / & whan he had dronke / he torned ageyne to the galhows ward / This knight came another tyme to the woman for to comforte her / And thre tymes he dyd ſoo / And as he was thus goyng and comynge / doubtynge hym of nobody / his hanged man was taken and had fro the galhows / And whanne the knyght was come ageyne to the galhows & ſawe that he had loſte his dede man / he was gretely abaſſhed & not withoute cauſe For hit was charged to hym vpon peyne to be hanged / yf he were take awey / This knyght thenne seynge his Judgement / tourned and went ageyne to the ſayd woman / & caſt hym at her feete / and laye before her as he had be dede / And ſhe demaũded of hym / My frend / what wylt thow that I doo for the / Allas ſayd he / I praye the that thow ſocoure and counceylle me now at my grete nede / For by cauſe I haue not kept wel my theef / whiche men haue rauyſſhed fro me / the kynge ſhalle make me to be put to dethe / And the woman ſayd / Haue no drede my frend / For well I ſhalle fynde the manere wherby thow ſhalt be delyuerd / For we ſhall take my huſbond / and ſhalle

hange

hange hym in ſtede of thy theef/ ¶ Thenne beganne ſhe to delue/ and tooke out of the erthe her huſbond/ and at nyȝt ſhe hanged hym at the galhows in ſtede of the other/ and ſayd to the knyght/ My ryght dere frend I pray the that this be kept well ſecrete/ For we doo hit rheefly/ and thus the dede men haue ſomme/ whiche make ſorowe for them/ but that ſorowe is ſone gone and paſſyd/ And they whiche ben on lyue haue ſome whiche drede them/ but theyr drede wantith and faylleth whan they ben dede

¶ The tenthe fable maketh mencyon of the pouer man / and of the comyn woman

OF the comyn and folyſihe wymmen Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable / Of a woman whiche had to name Tahys / the whiche was cauſe by her feyned loue of the dethe and loſſe of many yonge men / to one of the whiche ſhe had be bete ofte before that tyme / ſhe ſayd to hym in this wyſe / My ryght dere loue and good frende / I ſuppoſe that of many one I am wel byloued and deſpred / Neuertheles I ſhall ſette my loue on thy ſelf alone / wherfore I pray the that thow mayſt be myn / and I ſhalle be thyn for alle thy goodes I retche not / but only I deſyre thy ſwete body / And he that knewe the feyntyſe and falſheed of the woman / anſuered to her / ryght benyngly and ſwetely / thy wyll and the myn ben both but one alone / For thow arte ſhe whiche I mooſt deſyre / and the whiche I ſhalle loue all the terme of my lyf / Yf thow deceyue me nomore / For by cauſe that thow haſt decyued me in tyme paſſed / I am euer aferd of the / but notwithſtondynge this / thow

thow arte now moche playſaunt and fayr to the ſyghte of me / And thus the one begyled that other / For the loue of a comyn woman is not to be truſted / For thow oughteſt to knowe and thynk within thy ſelf / that the comyn and folyſſh woman loue the not / but ſhe loueth thy ſyluer

¶ The xj fable is of the fader and of the cuylle ſone

THe good and wyſe fader ought to chaſtyſe his children in theyr yong age / and not in theyr old age / For thenne hit is moche dyſſycyle to make them bowe. As to us reciteth this fable / Of a fader of famylle / whiche had a ſone / the whiche dyd no thynge that he oughte to haue done / but euer was goynge and playeng in the toune / And the fader for the cryme and myſrewle of his ſone brawled euer and bete his meyny / And ſayd to them ſuche a fable / Of a ploughman or labourer / whiche bond a bole by the hornes to an oxe. The booll wold not be bound / and ſmote ſtrongly whith his feet after the man / and launched his hornes at hym / ¶ And at the laſt whan he was bound / the labourer ſayd to them I haue ioyned and bound you bothe to gyder / to thende that ye doo ſomme labour / But I wyll that the leſt of yow two / that is to wete the boole / be lerned and corryged of the moſte / whiche is the oxe / For I muſt ſayd the labourer to

to hym ſelf bynde them thus to gyder / to thende that the bole / whiche is yong ſyen and malycious and ſtrong / ſmyte ne hurte nobody / wherof grete dommage myght come to me / But by cauſe that I bote well / that the oxe ſhalle teche and corryge hym wel / I haue put and bound them bothe to gyder / ¶ Thus this fable ſheweth to vs / that the fader ought to teche and gyue good enſample to his children and chaſtyſe them whanne they be yong For he that well loueth / wel he chaſtyſeth

¶ The xij fable is of the ſerpent

THe Auctor that is to wete Eſope reherceth to vs ſuche a fable of two euyls / ſayeng that a ſerpent entryd ſom tyme within the forge of a ſmythe / for to ſerche ſomme mete for her dyner / It happed / that ſhe fond a fyle whiche ſhe beganne to gnawe with her teethe / Thenne ſayd the fyle to her / yf thow byte and gnawe me / yet ſhalt thow doo to me no hurte / but bytynge and gnawyng on me / thow ſhalt hurte thyn owne ſelf / For by my ſtrengthe alle the yron is planed by me / And therfore thow arte a foole to gnawe me / For I telle the / that none euyll may hurte ne adommage another as euylle as he / Ne none wycked may hurte another wycked / ne alſo the hard ageynſt the hard ſhalle not breke eche other / ne two enuyous men ſhal not both ryde vpon an aſſe / wherfor the myghty and ſtronge muſt loue hym whiche is as myghty and as ſtrong as hym ſelf is

¶ The xiij fable is of the wulues and of the ſheep

WHanne men haue a good hede / and a good defenſour / or a good Capitayne / men oughte not to leue hym / for he that leueth hym repenteth hym after ward of hit / as to vs reherceth this fable / Of the ſheep whiche had werre and defcencion with the wolues / And by cauſe that the wulues made to ſtronge werre ageynſt the ſheep / the ſhepe thenne tooke for theyr help the dogges / and the whethers alſo / And thenne was the bataylle of the ſheep ſo grete and ſo ſtronge / & fought ſo vygorouſly ageynſt the wolues that they put them to flyȝt ¶ And whanne the wolues ſawe the ſtrengthe of theyr aduerſaryes / they ſent an ambaſſade toward the ſheep for to trete the pees with them / the whiche Ambaſſade ſayd to the ſheep in this maner / yf ye wylle gyue us the dogges / we ſhalle ſwere vnto yow oure feythe / that we ſhalle neuer kepe ne hold werre ageynſt yow / And the ſheep anſuerd / yf ye wylle gyue vs your fayth / we ſhalle be content / And thus they made pees to gyder /

gyder / but the wulues kyld the dogges / whiche were capytayns and protectours of the ſheep / And the dogges dyde but lytyll hurte to the wulues / wherfore whanne the lytyl and yong wulues were growen in theyr age / they came of eche part and countrey / and aſſembled them to gyder / and all of one accord and wylle ſayd to theyr aunceſtres and faders / we muſt ete vp alle the ſheep / And theyr faders anſuerd thus to them / we haue made pees with them / Neuertheles the yonge wolues brake the pees and ranne fyerſly vpon the ſheep / and theyr faders wente after them / ¶ And thus by cauſe that the ſheep had delyuerd the dogges to the wolues / the whiche were theyr capitayns / and that they had none that kepte them / they were all eten and deuoured of the wulues / Therfore hit is good to kepe well his capytayne / whiche may at a nede gyue ſocor and helpe / For a trewe frend is oftyme better at a nede than a Royalme / For yf the ſheep had kepte the loue of the dogges / the wolues had neuer deuoured them / wherfore it is a ſure thynge to kepe wel the loue of his protectour and good frende /

¶ xiiij fable is of the man and of the wood

He that gyueth ayde and help to his enemy is cauſe of his dethe / as recyteth this fable of a man whiche made an axe / And after that he had made his axe / he aſked of the trees / and ſayd / ye trees gyue yow to me a handle / and the trees were content / ¶ And whanne he had maade faſt his handle to the axe / he began to cutte and throwe doune to the ground alle the trees / wherfore the oke and the aſſhe ſayd / yf we be cutte / hit is wel ryght and reaſon / For to oure owne ſelf we ben cut and thrawen doune / ¶ And thus hit is not good to put hym ſelf in to the daunger and ſubiection of his enemye / ne to helpe hym for to be adōmaged / as thou maiſt ſee by this preſente fable / For men ought not to gyue the ſtaf by whiche they may be beten with

¶ The xb fable is of the wulf and of the dogge.

Lyberte or freedome is a moche ſwete thynge / as Eſope reherceth by this fable / of a wulf and of a dogge whiche by aduenture mette to gyder / wherfore the wulf demaunded of the dogge / wherof arte thow ſo fatte and ſo playſaunt / And the dogge anſuerd to hym / I haue wel kepte my lordes hows / & haue barked after the theues whiche came in the hows of my mayſter / wherfore he and his meyny gyue to me plente of good mete / wherof I am fatte and playſaunt / and the wulf ſayd thenne to hym / It is wel ſayd my broder / Certaynly ſyth thow arte ſo wel atte thyn eaſe and fareſt ſo wel I haue grete deſyre to dwelle with the / to thende that thow & I make but one dyner / wel ſayd the dogge / come on with me yf thow wylt be as wel at thyn eaſe as I am / and haue thou no doubte of no thynge / The wulf wente with the dogge / and as they wente by the way / the wulf beheld the dogges neck / whiche was al bare of here / and demaunded of the dogge / My broder why is thy neck ſo ſhauen / And the dog

dog anſuered / it is by cauſe of my grete coler of yron / to the whiche dayly I am faſted / And at nyght I am vnbound for to kepe the hows the better / Thenne ſayd the wulf to the dogge / This I wyſhe ne nede not / For I that am in lyberte / wylle not be put in no ſubiection / And therefor for to fylle my bely / I wylle not be ſubget / yf thou be acuſtommed for to be bound / contynue thow in hit / and I ſhalle lyue as I am wonte and acuſtomed / therfore there is no rycheſſe gretter / than lybete / for lyberte is better than alle the gold of the world /

¶ The xbj fable maketh mencion of the handes / of the feet / and of the mans bely

HOw ſhalle one do ony good to another / the whiche can doo no good to his owne ſelf / as thow mayſt ſee by this fable / Of the feet and of the handes / whiche ſomtyme had grede ſtryf with the bely / ſayenge / Al that we can or may wynne with grete labour thow eteſt it all / and yet thou dooſt no good / wherfore thou ſhalt no more haue nothynge of vs / and we ſhalle lete the deye for honger / And thenne when the bely was empty and ſore hongry / ſhe beganne to crye and ſayd Allas I deye for honger / gyue me ſomwhat to ete / and the feet and handes ſayd / thou geteſt no thynge of vs / and by cauſe that the bely myght haue no mete / the conduyts thorugh whiche the metes paſſeth became ſmal and narowe / And within fewe dayes after the feete and handes for the feblenes whiche they felte wold thenne haue guuen mete to the bely / but it was to late / for the conduits were ioyned to gyder And therfore the lymmes myght doo no good to other / that

is

is to wete the bely / And he that gouerneth not wel his bely withe grete payne he may hold the other lymmes in theyr ſtrengthe and vertue / wherfore a ſeruaunt ought to ſerue wel his mayſter / to thende that his mayſter hold and kepe hym honeſtly / and to receyue and haue good reward of hym / when his mayſter ſhalle ſee his feythfulneſſe

¶ The xvij fable is of the Ape and of the foxe.

F the poure and of the Ryche Eſope reherceth ſuche a fable / Of an ape / whiche prayd the foxe to gyue hym ſomme of his grete taylle for to couere his buttokes therwith / ſayenge thus to hym / what auaylleth to the ſoo long a taylle / hit doth but wagge / And that whiche letteth the / ſhalle be prouffitable and good for me / The foxe ſaid to hym I wold that hit were yet lenger / For rather I wold ſee hit al to fowled and dagged / than hit ſhold bere to yow ſuche honour / as to couere thy fowle buttoks therwith / And therfore gyue thou not that thynge of whiche thow haſt nede of / to the ende that afterward thow myſſer not of hit

¶ The xviij fable is of the marchaunt and of the asse

Many one ben trauaylled after theyr dethe / wherfore men ought not to deſyre the dethe / As reherceth Eſope by this fable / Of a marchaunt whiche ladde an aſſe laden vnto the market / And for to be the ſooner at the market / he bete his aſſe / and ſore prycked hym / wherfore the poure aſſe wyſſhed & deſyred his owne deth / wenyng to hym that after his dethe he ſhold be in reſte / And after that he had be wel bete and chaced he deyde / And his mayſter made hym to be flayne / and of his ſkynne he dyd doo make tumbours whiche ben euer bete / And thus for what payne that men may haue durynge his lyf / he ought not to deſyre and wyſſhe his dethe / For many one ben / whiche haue grete payne in this world that ſhall haue a gretter in the other world / For the man hath no reſte for the dethe but for his merytes

¶ The xix table is of the herte and of the oxe

ONely for to flee is aſſured to ſcape the daunger wherfore he fleeth / As thow ſhalt nowe ſee by this fable / Of a herte whiche rane byfore the dogges / and to thende that he ſhold not be take / he fledde in to the fyrſt toun that he found / & entryd in to a ſtable where as many oxen were / to whom he ſayd the cauſe why he was come there / prayeng them fwetely that they wold ſaue hym / And the oxen ſayd then to hym / Allas poure herte thow arte amonge vs euylle adreſſyd / thow ſholdeſt be more ſurely in the feldes ¶ For yf thow be perceyued or ſene of the oxeherd or els of the mayſter / Certaynly thow arte but dede / Helas for god & for pyte I praye yow that ye wylle hyde me within your racke / and that ye deceyue me not / and at nyght next comynge / I ſhalle goo hens / and ſhalle putte my ſelf in to a ſure place / ¶ And whanne the ſeruaunts came for to gyue hey to the oxen / they dyd caſt heye before the oxen / and wente ageyne theyre waye and ſawe not the hert / wherof the herte was gretely reioyſſhed wenynge to haue ſcaped the perylle

perylle of dethe / He thenne rendred thanke and grace to the oxen / and one of the oxen ſayd to hym / It is facyle to ſcape out of the handes of the blynd but hit is not facyle to ſcape out of the handes of hym thet ſeeth wel / For yf oure mayſter come hyther whiche hath more than an honderd eyen / Certayn thow arte deed yf he perceyue the ¶ And yf he ſee the not / certaynly thow arte ſaued / and ſhalt goo forthe on thy waye ſurely /

The mayſter within a ſhort whyle after entryd in to the ſtable / And after he commaunded to vyſyte and ſee the hey / whiche was before his oxen / And hym ſelf went and taſted / yf they had ynough of hit / And as he taſted thus the heye / he felt the hornes of the herte with his hand / and to hym ſelf he ſayd / what is that that I fele here / and beynge dredeful called alle his ſeruauntes / and demaunded of the manere how the herte was come thyder / And they ſayd to hym / my lord I knowe nothynge therof / And the lord was full gladde and made the herte to be taken and ſlayne / and maade a grete feeſt for to haue ete hym / Therfore it happeth oftyme / that he whiche ſuppoſeth to flee is taken and hold within the lace or nette / For he that fleeth awey is in grete perylle / wherfore men ought wel to kepe them ſelf to doo ſuche dede / that they muſt nedes flee therfore

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the fallace of the lyon / And of his conuersacion

TO conuerſe with folke of euylle lyf is a thyng moche peryllous / And only to ſpeke with them letteth moch other / As this fable reherceth of a lyon ryght ſtrong and ryght myghty / the whiche made hym ſelf kynge for to haue grete renommee and glorye / And fro thenne forthon he beganne to chaunge his condycions and cuſtomme ſhewing hym ſelf curtois / and ſwore that he ſhold hurte no beſtes / but ſhold kepe them ageynſt euery one / And of this promeſſe he repented hym by cauſe hit is moche dyffycyle and hard to chaunge his owne kynd / And therfore whanne he was angry / he lad with hym ſomme ſmalle beeſtes in to a ſecrete place for to ete and deceyue them / And demaunded of them / yf his mouthe ſtanke or not / And alle they that ſayd that it ſtanke or not were al ſaued / And alle they the whiche anſuered not he kylled / & deuoured them al / It happed that he demaunded of the Ape / yf his mouthe ſtanke or not / And thape ſayd no but that

that hit ſmelleth lyke bame/ And thenne the lyon had ſhame to ſlee the ape/ but he fond a grete falſheed for to put hym to dethe/ He fayned to be ſeke and commaunded that al his leches & Cyrurgyens ſhold anone come vnto hym/ whan they were come/ he commaunded them to loke his vryne/ And whan they had ſene hit/ they ſayd to hym/ Syre ye ſhalle ſoone be hole/ But ye muſt ete lyght metes/ And by cauſe that ye be kynge/ alle is at your commaundement/ And the lyon anſuerd Allas Ryght fayne I wold ete of an Ape/ Certaynly ſayd the medecyn that ſame is good mete/ Thenne was the Ape ſente for And notwithſtondyng that he worſhipfully ſpak and anſuerd to the kynge/ the kynge made hym to dye/ and deuoured hym ¶ Therfore hit is peryllous and harmeful to be in the felauſhip of a Tyraunt/ For be hit euylle or good he wylle ete and deuoure euery thynge/ And wel happy is he/ that may ecape fro his blody handes/ And that may eſchewe and flee the felauſhip of the eyyll tyraunt

¶ Here fynyſſhed the thyrdde booke of the ſubtyle fables of Eſope/

¶ The fyrst fable maketh mencyon of the foxe and of the raysyns

HE is not wyſe / that deſyreth to haue a thynge whiche he may not haue / As reciteth this fable Of a foxe / whiche loked and beheld the rayſyns that grewe vpon an hyghe vyne / the whiche rayſyns he moche deſyred for to ete them ¶ And whanne he ſawe that none he myght gete / he torned his ſorowe in to Ioye / and ſayd theſe rayſyns ben ſowre /

ſowre / and yf I had ſome I wold not ete them / And therfore this fable ſheweth that he is wyſe / whiche fayneth not to deſyre that thynge the whiche he may not haue /

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¶ The second fable is of the auncyent wesel and of the rat /

WYtte is better than force or ſtrengthe / As reherceth to vs this fable of an old weſel / the whiche myghte no more take no rats / wherfore ſhe was ofte ſore hongry and bethought her that ſhe ſhold hyde her ſelf withynne the flowre for to take the rats whiche came there for to ete hit. And as the rats came to the floure / ſhe took and ete them eche one after other / And as the oldeſt rat of all perceyued & knewe her malyce / he ſayd thus in hym ſelf / Certaynly I ſhalle kepe me wel fro the / For I knowe alle thy malyce & falſhede ¶ And therfore he is wyſe that ſcapeth the wytte and malyce of eyylle folke / by wytte and not by force

¶ The thirde fable is of the wulf and of the sheepherd and of the hunter

MAny folke ſhewe themſelf good by theyr wordes whiche are ful of grete fantaſyes / As reherceth to vs thys fable of a wulf whiche fledde byfore the hunter / and as he fledde he mette with a ſheepherd / to whome he ſaid my frende I praye the that thow telle not to hym that folowith me whiche wey I am gone / & the ſheep herd ſaid to hym haue no drede ne fere nothynge / For I ſhalle not accuſe the / For I ſhalle ſhewe to hym another way / And as the hunter came / he demaunded of the ſheepherd yf he had ſene the wulf paſſe / And the hunter both with the heed and of the eyen ſhewed to the hunter the place where the wulf was / & with the hand and the tongue ſhewed alle the contrarye / And incontynent the hunter vnderſtood hym wel / But the wulf whiche perceyued wel all the fayned maners of the ſheepherd fled awey / ¶ And within a lytyl whylle after the ſheepherd encountred and mette with the wulf / to whome he ſayd / paye me of that

I haue kepte the ſecrete/ ¶ And thenne the wulf anſuered to hym in this maner/ I thanke thyn handes and thy tongue/ and not thyn hede ne thyn eyen/ For by them I ſhold haue ben betrayed/ yf I had not fledde aweye/ ¶ And therfore men muſt not truſte in hym that hath two faces and two tongues/ for ſuche folk is lyke and ſemblable to the ſcorpion/ the whiche enoynteth with his tongue/ and prycketh ſore with his tayle

¶ The fourth fable is of Iuno the goddesse and of the pecok and of the nyghtyngale

EVery one oughte to be content of kynde / and of ſuche good as god hath ſente vnto hym / wherof he muſt vſe Iuſtly / As reherceth this fable of a pecok whiche came to Iuno the goddeſſe / and ſayd to her I am heuy and ſorowful / by cauſe I can not ſynge as wel as the nyghtyngale For euery one mocketh and ſcorneth me / by cauſe I can not ſynge / And Iuno would comforte hym and ſayd / thy fayre forme and beaute is fayrer and more worthy and of gretter preyſynge than the ſonge of the nyghtyngale / For thy fethers and thy colour ben reſplendyſſhyng as the precious Emerawd And theyr is no byrde lyke to thy fethers ne to thy beaulte / ¶ And the pecok ſayd thenne to Iuno / All this is nought / ſyth I can not ſynge / And thenne Iuno ſayd ageyne thus to the pecok for to contente hym / This is in the deſpoſycion of the goddes / whiche haue gyuen to eyther of yow one propyrte / and one vertue / ſuche as it pleaſyd them / As to the they

they haue gyuen fayr fygure / to the egle haue they gyuen ſtrengthe / and to the nyghtyngale fayr & playſaũt ſonge / And ſo to all other byrdes / wherfore euery one muſt be content of that that he hath For the myſerable auaryꝯcious / the more goodes that they haue the more they deſyre to haue

¶ The .v. fable maketh mencion of the panthire and of the vylayns

EVery one ought to do wel to the ſtraunger and forgyue to the myſerable / As reherceth this fable of a panthere whiche fylle in to a pytte / And whan the vylaynes or chorles of the country ſawe her / ſomme of them beganne to ſmyte on her / and the other ſayd pardonne and forgyue her / for ſhe hath hurted no body / and other were that gaf to her breed / And another ſayd to the vylayns / beware ye well that ye ſlee her not / And by cauſe that they were al of dyuerſe wyll / euerychone of them wente and retorned home ageyne wenynge that ſhe ſhold deye within the ſayd pytte / but lytyl and lytyl ſhe clymmed vp / and wente to her hows ageyne / and made her to be wel medicyned / in ſo moche / that ſoone ſhe was al hole / ¶ And within a whylle after ſhe hauynge in her memorye the grete Iniurye that had be done to her came ageyne to the place where ſhe had be hurte and ſore bete / & began to kylle & ſlee al the beſtes whiche were there

there about and put al the ſheepherds and ſwyne-herds & other whiche kepte beeſtes all to flyght / ſhe brente the Corne & many other euyl and grete harme ſhe dyd then aboute / And whanne the folke of the country ſawe the grete dommage that ſhe dyd to them / they came toward her / prayenge that ſhe wold haue pyte on them / And to them ſhe anſuerd in this manere / I am not come hyther to take vengeaunce on them whiche haue had pyte and myſerycorde of me / but only on them that wold haue ſlayne me / And for the wycked and euyele folk I recyte this fable / to thende that they hurte no body / For yf alle the vylaynes hadde hadde pyte / the one as the other of the poure panthere or ſerpent whiche was ſtraunger and myſerable / as moche as ſhe was fallen in to the pytte / the for ſayd euylle and dommyge had not come to them

¶ The vi fable is of the bochers and of the whethers

WHanne a lygnage or kynred is indyfferent or indyuyſyon / not lyghtly they ſhalle doo ony thynge to theyr ſalute / as reherceth to vs this fable / Of a bocher whiche entryd within a ſtable full of whethers / And after as the whethers ſawe hym / none of them ſayd one word / And the bocher toke the fyrſt that he fonde / ¶ Thenne the whethers ſpake al to gyder and ſayd / lete him doo what he wylle / And thus the bocher tooke him all one after another ſauf one onely / And as he wold haue taken the laſt / the poure whether ſayd to hym / Iuſtly I am worthy to be take / by cauſe I haue not holpen my felawes / For he that wylle not helpe ne comforte other / ought not to demaunde or aſke helpe ne comforte / For vertue whiche is vnyed is better than vertue ſeparate

¶ The ſeuenth fable is of the fawkoner and of the byrdes

THe wyſe ought to kepe and obſerue the good couceyll / And in no wyſe they ought not to doo the contrarye / As reherceth to vs this fable / Of the byrdes whiche were Ioyeful and gladde / as the prymtemps came / by cauſe that theyr neſtes were thenne al couerd with Ieues / And Incontynent they beheld and ſawe a fawkoner whiche dreſſyd and leyd laces and nettes for to take them / ¶ And thenne they ſayd al to gyder / Yonder man hath pyte of vs / For whanne he beholdeth vs he wepeth / ¶ And thenne the pertryche / whiche had experymented and aſſayed all the deceytes of the ſayd Fawkoner / ſayd to them / kepe yow alle wel fro that ſayd man and flee byghe in to the ayer / For he ſeketh nothynge / but the manere for to take yow / or to the markette he ſhalle bere yow for to be ſold / And they that byleuyd his couceylle were ſaued / And they that byleuyed it not were taken and loſt / ¶ And therfore they whiche byleue good councylle are delyuerd oute of theyr peryles / And they whiche byleue it not ben euer in grete daunger

IN tyme paſſed men preyſyd more the folke full of leſynges and falſhede than the man full of trouthe/ the whiche thynge regneth gretely vnto this daye/ As we may ſee by this preſent fable/ Of the man of trouthe and of the man lyar/ whiche went to gyder thorugh the countrey/ And ſo longe they wente to gyder by theyr journeyes/ that they came in to the prouynce of the apes/ And the kynge of thapes made them bothe to be taken and brought before hym And he beynge in his Royal mageſte/ where as he ſatte lyke an Emperour/ and alle his Apes aboute hym/ as the ſubgets ben aboute theyr lord/ wold haue demaunded/ and in dede he demaunded of the lyer/ who am I/ And the leſynge maker and flaterer ſayd to hym/ thow arte emperour and kynge/ the fayreſt creature that is on earthe/ ¶ And after the kynge demaunded of hym ageyne/ who ben theſe whiche ben al aboute me/ And the lyar anſuerd/ Syre they ben thy knyghtes & your ſubgettes for to kepe

kepe your perſone / and your Royalme / And thenne the kynge ſayd thow arte a good man / I wyle that thow be my grete ſtyward of my houſhold / and that euery one bere to the honour and reuerence / And whan the man of trouthe herd alle this he ſayd to hym ſelf / yf this man for to haue made leſynges is ſoo gretely enhaunced / thenne by gretter rayſon / I ſhalle be more worſhipped and enhaunced / yf I ſaye trouthe / ¶ And after the kynge wold aſke the trewe man / and demaunded of hym / who am I / and alle that ben aboute me / And thenne the man of trouthe anſuerd thus to hym / thow arte an ape and a beſte ryght abhomynable / And alle they whiche ben aboute the are lyke and ſemblable to the / ¶ The kynge thenne commaunded that he ſhold be broken and toren with teeth and clawes and put alle in to pycees / And therfore it happeth ofte that the lyers and flaterers ben enhauced / and the men of trouthe ben ſet alowe and put aback / For oftyme for to ſaye trouthe men leſe theyre lyues / the whiche thynge is ageynſt Iuſtyce and equyte

¶ The ix fable is of the hors / of the hunter and of the hert /

NOne ought to put hym ſelf in ſubiection for to auenge hym on other / For better is not to ſubmytte hymſelf / than after to be ſubmytted / As reherceth to vs this fable / Of an hors whiche had enuye ouer an herte / by cauſe the herte was fayrer than he / and the hors by enuye went vnto an hunter / to whome he ſayd in this manere / yf thow wylt byleue me / we ſhalle this day take a good proye / Lepe vpon my bak / and take thy ſwerd / and we ſhalle chace the herte / and thow ſhalt hytte hym with thy ſwerd / and kylle hym / and ſhalt take hym / and thenne his fleſſhe thow mayſt ete / and his ſkynne thow mayſt ſelle /

¶ And thenne the hunter moued by auaryce / demaunded of the hors / thynkeſt thow by thy feythe that we may take the herte / of whomme thow ſpekeſt to me of / ¶ And the hors anſwerd thus / Suffyſe the / For ther to I ſhalle put al my dylygence and alle my ſtrengthe / lepe vpon me / and doo after my counceylle / ¶ And thenne

thenne the Hunter lepte forthwith vpon the hors backe / And the hors beganne to renne after the herte / And whanne the herte ſawe / hym come he fled / And by cauſe that the hert ranne faſter / than the hors did / he ſcaped fro them / and ſaued hym / ¶ And thenne when the hors ſawe and felte hym moche wery / and that he myght no more renne / he ſayd to the hunter in this manere / alyght fro my back / For I may bere the no more and haue myſt of my proye / Thenne ſayd the hunter to the hors Syth thow arte entryd in to my handes / yet ſhalt not thow eſcape thus fro me / thow haſt the brydel in thy mouthe wherby thow mayeſt be kepte ſtylle and arreſted / And thow wylt lepe / the ſadell ſhalle ſaue me / And yf thow wylt caſte thy feet fro the / I haue good ſpores for to conſtrayne and make the goo whether thow wylt or not where as I wylle haue the / And therfore kepe the wel / that thow ſheweſt not thy ſelf rebelle vnto me / ¶ Therfore it is not good to put and ſubmytte hym ſelf vnder the handes of other wenynge therby to be auenged of hym / ageynſte whome men haue enuye / For who ſubmytteth hym ſelf vnder the myght of other / he byndeth hym ſelf to hym

¶ The tenthe fable is of the asse and of the lyon

THe grete callers by theyr hyghe and lowd crye ſuppoſen to make folke aferd/ As recyteth this fable/ Of an aſſe whiche ſomtyme mette with a lyon/ to the whiche the aſſe ſayd/ lette vs clymme vpon the montayne/ and I ſhalle ſhewe to the/ how the beeſtes ben aferd of me/ and the lyon beganne to ſmyle/ and he anſuerd to the aſſe/ Goo we my broder/ And whan they were on the top of the hylle/ the aſſe byganne to crye/ And the foxe and hares beganne to flee/ And whanne thaſſe ſaw them flee ſayd to the lyon/ Seeſt thow not how theſe beeſtes dreden and doubten me/ and the lyon ſayde/ I had ben aſo ferdfull of thy voys/ yf I had not knowen veryly that thow arte but an aſſe/ ¶ And therfore men nede not doubte ne drede hym that auanceth hym ſelf for to do that that he may not doo/ For god kepe the mone fro the wulues/ Ne alſo men nede not doubte a foole for his menaces/ ne for his hyghe crye

¶ The xj fable is of the hawke and of other byrdes

THe ypocrytes maken to god a berd of ſtrawe / As recyteth to vs this fable / Of a hawke / whiche ſomtyme fayned / that he wold haue celebrated and holden a natall or a grete feſte / the whiche feſte ſhold be celebred within a Temple / And to this feſte and ſolempnyte he Inuyted and ſomoned alle the ſmal byrdes / to the whiche they came / And Inkontynent as they were all come in to the temple / the hauk ſhette the gate and put them alle to dethe / one after an other / ¶ And therfore this fable ſheweth to vs / how we muſt kepe our ſelf fro all them / whiche vnder fayre ſemynge haue a fals herte / and that ben ypocytes and deceptours of god and of the world /

¶ The xij fable is of the foxe / and of the lyon

FAyre doctryne taketh he in hym ſelf / that chaſtyſeth hym by the perylle of other / As to vs reherceth this preſent fable / Of a lyon whiche ſomtyme faygned hym ſelf ſeke / ¶ And whanne the beeſtes knewe that the lyon was ſeke / they wold goo alle to vyſyte and ſee hym as theyr kynge / ¶ And Incontynent as the beeſtes entryd in to his hows for to ſee and comforte hym / he deuoured and ete them / ¶ And whan the foxes were come to the yate for to haue vyſyded the lyon / they knewe wel the fallace and falſhede of the lyon and ſalewed hym at the entre of the yate / And entryd not within / ¶ And whan the lyon ſawe that they wold not entre in to his hows / he demaũded of them / why they wold not come within / And one of the foxes ſayd to hym / we knowe wel by thy traces / that alle the beeſtes whiche haue entryd in to thy hows came not oute ageyne / And alſo yf we entryd within / nomore ſhold we come ageyne ¶ And therfor he is wel happy that taketh enſample by

by the dommage of other/ ¶ For to entre in to the hows of a grete lord/ it is wel facyle/ but for to come oute of hit ageyne it is moche dyffycyle/

¶ The xiij fable is of the asse / and of the wulf

TO none eyylle man ſeythe ne trouthe ought neuer to be adiouſted / As men may wel ſee by this fable / Of a wulf whiche vyſyted an aſſe whiche was wel ſeke the whiche wulf beganne to fele and taſte hym / and demaunded of hym / My broder and my frend where aboute is thy ſore / And the aſſe ſayd to hym / there as thow taſteſt ¶ And thenne the wulf faynyng to vyſyte hym / beganne to byte and ſmyte hym / ¶ And therfore men muſt not truſt flaterers / For one thynge they ſaye / and done another

¶ The xiiij fable is of the hedgehogge and of the lytyl kyddes

IT behodeth not to the yong and lytyl of age to mocke ne ſcorne theyr older / As this fable ſayth / of thre lytyl hedgehogges / whiche mocked a grete hedgehogge / whiche fled before a wulf / And whanne he perceyued the ſcornyng of them / he ſayd to them / Ha a poure fooles & wood ye wote not wherfore I flie / For yf ye wyſt and knewe wel thyn conuenyent and paryll / ye ſhold not mocke of hit / And therfore whan men ſeen that the grete and myghty ben ferdful and doubtous / the laſſe or lytyll oughen not to be aſſured / For whan the toune is taken and goten by fortune of warre the Country aboute is not therfore more acertayned / but ouȝt to tremble and ſhake

¶ The xb fable is of the man and of the lyon /

MEn ought not to byleue the paynture / but the trouthe and the dede / As men may ſee by this preſent Fable / Of a man & of a lyon whiche had ſtryf to gyder & were in grete diſcenſion for to wete and knowe / whiche of them bothe was more ſtronger / ¶ The man ſayd that he was ſtronger than the lyon / And for to haue his fayenge veryfyed / he ſhewed to the lyon a pyctour / where as a man had vyctory ouer a lyon / As the pyctour of Sampſon the ſtronge ¶ Thenne ſayd the lyon to the man / yf the lyon coude make pyctour good and trewe / hit had be herin paynted / how the lyon had had vyctorye of the man / but now I ſhalle ſhewe to the very and trewe wytneſſe therof / The lyon thenne ledde the man to a grete pytte / And there they fought to gyder / But the lyon caſte the man into the pytte / and ſubmytted hym in to his ſubiection and ſayd / Thow man / now knoweſt thow alle the trouthe / whiche of vs bothe is ſtronger / ¶ And therfore at the werke is knowen the beſt and moſt ſubtyle werker /

¶ The xbj fable is of the camel / and of the flee

HE that hath no myght ought not to gloryfye ne preyſe hym ſelf of nothynge / As reherceth to vs this preſente fable of a camell / whiche bare a grete charge or burden It happed that a flee by cauſe of the camels here lepte to the back of the camel / and made her to be borne of hym all the day And whanne they had made a grete way / And that the camel came at euen to the lodgys / and was put in the ſtable / the flee lepte fro hym to the grounde beſyde the foote of the camel / And after ſayd to the camel / I haue pyte of the / and am comen doune fro thy back by cauſe that I wylle nomore greue ne trauaylle the by the berynge of me / And the camel ſayd to the flee / I thanke thee / how be it that I am not ſore laden of the / And therfore of hym which may neyther helpe ne lette men nede not make grete eſtymacion of

¶ The xbij fable is of the Ant and of the fygale

IT is good to purueye hym ſelf in the ſomer ſeaſon of ſuche thynges / wherof he ſhalle myſter and haue nede in wynter ſeaſon / As thow mayſt ſee by this preſent fable / Of the fygalle / whiche in the wynter tyme went and demaunded of the ant ſomme of her Corne for to ete / ¶ And thenne the ant ſayd to the fygall / what haſt thow done al the ſomer laſt paſſed / And the fygalle anſuerd / I haue ſonge / ¶ And after ſayd the ante to her / Of my corne ſhallt not thou none haue / And yf thow haſt ſonge alle the ſomer / danſe now in wynter / ¶ And therfore there is one tyme for to doo ſome labour and werk / And one tyme for to haue reſt / For he that werketh not ne doth no good / thal haue ofte at his teeth grete cold and lacke at his nede /

¶ The xviij fable is of the pylgrym and of the ſwerd

An euylle man maye be cauſe of the perdycion or loſſe of many folke / As reherceth to vs this preſent Fable / Of a pylgrym / whiche fond in his way a ſwerd ¶ And aſked of the ſwerd / what is he that hath loſt the / ¶ And the ſwerd anſwerd to the pylgrym / A man alone hath loſt me / but many one I haue loſt / And therfor an euyl man may wel be loſt / but er he be loſt he may wel lette many one / For by cauſe of an euylle man may come in a Countrey many euyls

¶ The xix fable is of the sheep and of the Crowe

MEn ought not to iniurye ne defprayſe the poure Innocentes ne the ſymple folke· As reherceth this fable/ Of a Crowe/ whiche ſette her ſelf vpon the back of a ſheep/ And whan the ſheep had born her a grete whyle ſhe ſayd to her/ thow ſhalt kepe thy ſelf wel to ſette vpon a dogge/ ¶ And thenne the crowe ſayd to the ſheep/ Thynke thow poure Innocent that I wote wel with whome I playe/ For I am old and malycious/ and my kynde is to lette all Innocents/ and to be frende vnto the euyls/ ¶ A[n]d therfore this fable wylle telle and ſaye/ how ther be folke of ſuche kynde/ that they wyl doo no good werk/ but only to lette euer the Innocents and ſymple folke

¶ The xx fable maketh mencion of the tree and of the reed /

NOne ought to be prowd ageynſt his lord / but oughte to humble hym ſelf toward hym / As this fable reherceth to vs of a grete tre / whiche wold neuer bowe hym for none wynd / And a reed whiche was at his foote bowed hym ſelf as moche as the wynd wold / And the tree ſayd to hym / why doſt thow not abyde ſtylle as I doo / And the reed anſuerd / I haue not the myght whiche thow haſt / And the tree ſayd to the reed prowdly / than haue I more ſtrengthe / than thow / And anone after came a grete wynde / whiche threwe doune to the ground the ſayd grete tree / and the reed abode in his owne beynge / For the prowde ſhall be allway humbled And the meke and hũble ſhalle be enhaunced / For the roote of alle vertue is obedynce and humylyte

¶ Here fynyſſheth the fourthe book of the subtyle Fables of Esope / And how be it that mor

mor of them ben not found in ony Regystre / Neuertheles many other fables composed by hym / haue ben founden whiche here after folowen

¶ The fyrste fable maketh mencion of the mulet / of the foxe / and of the wulf

MEn Calle many folke Aſſes / that ben wel ſubtyll / And ſuche wenen to knowe moche / and to be a grete clerke that is but an aſſe / As hit appiereth by thys fable / Of a mule whiche ete graſſe in a medowe nyghe to a grete foreſt / to whome came a foxe whiche demaunded of hym / What arte thow / And the mule anſuerd I am a beeſt / And the foxe ſayd to hym / I ne demaunde ne aſke of the that / but I aſke who was thy fader / ¶ And the mule anſuerd / my grete fader was a hors / And the foxe ſayd ageyne I ne demaunde to the that / but only that thow telleſt me / who thow arte named / And the mule ſayd to the foxe / I ne wote / by cauſe I was lytyll whanne my fader deyde / Neuertheles to thende that my name ſhold not be forgoten / my fader made hit to be wreton vnder my lyfte foote behynde / wherfore uf thow wylt knowe my name / goo thow and loke vnder my foote / ¶ And whanne the foxe vnderſtood the fallace or falſhede / he wente

wente ageyne into the foreſt / And met with the wulf / to whome he ſayd / Ha myſchaunt beeſt / what doſt thow here / Come with me and in to thy hand I ſhall put a good proy Loke in to yonder medowe / there ſhalt thow fynde a fatte beeſt Of the whiche thow mayſt be fylled / ¶ And thenne the wulf entryd in to the medowe / and fonde there the mule / Of whom he demaunnded / who arte thow / And the mule anſuerd to the wulf / I am a beeſt / And the wulf ſayd to hym / This is not that that I aſke to the / but telle how thow arte named / And the mule ſayd I wote not / but neuertheleſs yf thow wylt knowe my name / thow ſhalt fynde it wreton at my lyfte foote behynde / Thenne ſayd the wulf / I praye the / vouche ſauf to ſhewe it to me / And the mule lyft up his foote / ¶ And as the wulf beheld and ſtudyed in the foote of the mule / the Mule gaf hym ſuche a ſtroke whith his foote before his forhede / that almoſt the brayne ranne oute of his hede / And the foxe whiche was within a buſſhe and ſawe alle the maner beganne to lawhe and mocque the wulf / to whomme he ſayd / Foole beeſte thow woſt wel / that thow canſt not rede / wherfore yf euylle is therof come to the / thy ſelf is cauſe of hit / For none ought not to entremete hym to doo that / that Impoſſyble is to hym /

¶ The ſecond fable is of the bore and of the wulf

Vche deſyren to be grete lordes / and dyſpreyſen his parents / that at the laſt becomen poure and fallen in to grete diſhonour / As thow mayſt ſee by this preſent fable / Of a bore / whiche was amonge a grete herd of other ſwynes / And for to haue lordſhip and domynacion ouer alle them / he beganne to make grete rumour / and ſhewed his grete teeth for to make the other ſwynes aferd / but by cauſe they knewe hym / they ſette naught by hym / wherof he diſpleaſed moche / and wold goo in to a herd of ſheep / and emonge lambes / And whanne he was amonge the lambes / he began to make grete rumour / and ſhewed his ſharp and long teeth ¶ And whanne the lambes herd hym / they were ſore aferd / and begganne to ſhake for fere / ¶ And thenne ſayd the bore within hym ſelf / here is the place wherin I muſt abyde and duell For here I ſhalle be gretely worſhipped / For euerychone quaken for fere of me / ¶ Thenne came the wulf there for to haue and rauyſſe ſomme proye / And the

the lambes beganne alle to flee / but the bore as prowd wold not ſtere hym / ne go fro the place / by cauſe he ſuppoſed to be lord / but the wulf toke hym / and bare hym in to the wode for to ete hym / ¶ And as the wulf bare hym / it happed that he paſſed before the herd of ſwynes / whiche the bore had leſte / ¶ And thenne whanne the bore perceyued and knewe them / he prayd and cryed to them / that for the loue of god they wold helpe hym / And that withoute her help / he was deed / And thenne the ſwynes alle of one aſſent and owne wylle wente and recouered theyr ſelewe / and after ſlewe the wulf / And as the bore was delyuerd / and ſawe hym amonge the ſwynes / and that alle his doubte and fere was gone / he beganne to haue vergoyne and ſhame / by cauſe that he was thus departed / and gone fro theyr ſelauſhip and ſayd to them / My bretheren and my frendes / I am well worthy to haue had this payne / by cauſe / I was gone & departed from yow / And therfore he that is wel / lete hym beware that he moue not hym ſelf / For ſuche by his pryde deſyreth to be a grete lord / whiche ofte falleth in grete pouerte /

¶ The thyrd fable is of the foxe and of the cocke /

Ftyme moche talkynge letteth / As hit appiereth by this fable / Of a foxe / whiche came toward a Cocke / And ſayd to hym / I wold fayne wete / yf thow canſt as wel ſynge as thy fader dyde / And thenne the Cock ſhette his eyen / and beganne to crye and ſynge / ¶ And thenne the Foxe toke and bare hym awey / And the peple of the towne cryed / the foxe bereth awey the cok / ¶ And thenne the Cocke ſayd thus to the Foxe / My lord vnderſtandeſt thow not / what the peple ſayth / that thow bereſt awey theyr cock / telle to them / that it is thyn / and not theyrs / And as the foxe ſayd / hit is not yours / but it is myn / the cok ſcaped fro the foxe mouthe / and flough vpon a tree / And thenne the Cok ſayd to the fox thow lyeſt / For I am theyrs and not thyn / And thenne the foxe beganne to hytte erthe bothe with his mouthe & heed ſayenge / mouthe / thow haſt ſpoken to moche / thow ſholdeſt haue eten the Cok / had not be thyn

ouer

ouer many wordes / And therfor ouer moche talkyng letteth / and to moche crowynge ſmarteth / therfore kepe thy ſelf fro ouer many wordes / to thende / that thow repenteſt the not

¶ The fourthe fable is of the dragon and of the herte

MEn ought not to rendre euylle for good/ And them that helpen ought not to be letted/ As reherceth thys fable Of a dragon whiche was within a Ryuer/ and as this Ryuer was dymynuyſſhed of water/ the dragon abode at the Ryuage/ whiche was al drye/ And thus for lack of watre he coude not ſtere hym/ A labourer or vylayne came thēne that waye/ and demaunded of the dragon/ what doſt thow there/ And the dragon anſuerd to hym/ I am here leſte withoute water/ withoute whiche I can not meue/ but yf thow wilt bynd me/ and ſette me vpon thyn aſſe/ and lede me in to my Ryuer/ I ſhal gyue to the habondaunce of gold and ſyluer/ And the vylayne or chorle for courtyſe bound and ledde hym in to his repayre/ And whanne he had vnbounden hym/ he demaunded his ſallary/ and payment/ And the dragon ſayd to hym/ By cauſe that thow haſt bounden me/ thow wylt

wylt be payd And by cauſe that I am now hongry / I ſhalle ete the / and the vylayne anſuerd and ſayd / For to haue done wel / thow wylt ete and deuoure me / And as they ſtryued to gyder / the foxe whiche was within the foreſt herd wel theyr queſtion and different came to them / and ſayd in this manere / Stryue ye no more to gyder / For I wyll acord / and make pees bytwixt you Lâte eche of yow telle to me his reaſon for to wete / whiche of yow hath ryght / And whanne eche of them had told his caas the foxe ſayd to the vylayne / Shewe thow to me / how thow boundeſt the dragon / to thende / that I may gyue therof a trewe and lawfull ſentence / And the vylayne put the dragon vpon his aſſe / and bound hym as he had done before / And the fox demaunded of the dragon / helde he thenne the ſo faſt bounden / as he dothe now / And the dragon anſuerd / ye my lord / and yet more hard / And the foxe ſayd to the vylayn / Bynde hym yet more harder / For who that wel byndeth / well can he vnbynd And whanne the dragon was faſt and wel bounden / the fox ſayd to the vylayne / bere hym ageyne there as thow fyrſt tokeſt hym / And there thow ſhalt leue hym bounden as he is now / And thus he ſhalle not ete ne deuoure the / For he that dothe euylle / euylle he muſt haue /

baue / For Juſtly he ſhall ben punyſſhed of god / they that done harme and dommage to the poure folke For who ſo euer rendreth euylle for good / he ſhalle therof iuſtly be rewarded

¶ The v fable is of the foxe and of the catte /

THere is many folke / whiche auaun-cen them and ſaye that they ben wyſe and ſubtyle / whiche ben grete fooles and knowynge no thynge / As this fable reherceth Of a foxe whiche ſom tyme mette with a Catte / to whome he ſayd / My godſep / god geue yow good daye / And the catte anſwerd / my lord god gyue yow good lyf / And thenne the foxe demaunded of hym / My godſep what canſt thow doo / And the catte ſayd to hym / I can lepe a lytyl / And the fox ſayd to hym / Certaynly thow art not worthy to lyue / by cauſe that thow canſt nought doo / And by cauſe that the cat was angry of foxes wordes / he aſked and demaunded of the foxe / And thow godſep what canſt thow doo / A thouſand wyles haue I ſayd the foxe / For I haue a sak ful of ſcyences and wyles / And I am ſo grete a clerke / that none maye begyle ne deceyue me / And as they were thus ſpekyng to gyder the cat perceyued a knyght comynge toward them / whiche had many dogges with hym / and ſayd to the foxe / My godſep / certaynly

certaynly I ſee a knygtt comynge hyther ward / whiche ledeth with hym many dogges / the whiche as ye wel knowe ben our enemyes / The foxe thenne anſuerd to the cat / My godſep / thou ſpekeſt lyke a coward / and as he that is aferd / lete them come and care not thow / And Incontynently as the dogges perceyued and ſawe the foxe and the catte / they beganne to renne vpon them / And whanne the foxe ſawe them come / he ſayd to the kat / Flee we my broder / flee we / To whome the kat anſuerd / Certaynly godſep / therof is none nede / neuer the les the foxe bylued not the cat / but fledde / and ranne as faſt as he myght for to ſaue hym / And the catte lepte vpon a tree and ſaued hym ſelf / ſayenge / Now ſhalle we ſee / who ſhalle playe beſt for to preſerue and ſaue hym ſelf / And whanne the catte was vpon a tree / he loked aboute hym / and ſawe how the dogges held the foxe with theyr teethe / to whome he cryed and ſeyd / O godſep and ſubtyle foxe / of thy thowſand wyles that ſyth late thow coudeſt doo / lete me now ſee / and ſhewe to me one of them / the foxe anſuerd not / but was killed of the dogges fend the catte was ſaued / ¶ And therfore the wyſe ought not to deſprayſe the ſymple / For ſuche ſuppoſeth to be moche wyſe whiche is a kynd and a very foole /

¶ The vj fable is of the hegoote and of the wulf

THe feble ought not to arme hym ageynſt the ſtronge / As recyteth this preſent fable of a wulf / whiche ſome tyme ranne after a hegoot / and the hegoot for to ſaue hym lept vpon a rocke / and the wulf beſyeged hym / ¶ And after whan they had duelled there two or thre dayes / the wulf beganne to wexe hongry / and the hegoote to haue thurſt / And thus the wulf went for to ete / and the hegoot went for to

to drynke / And as the hegoot dranke he ſawe his ſhadowe in the water / and ſpeculynge and beholdynge his ſhadowe profered and ſayd ſuche wordes within hym ſelf / Thou haſt ſo fayre legges / ſo fayr a berd / and ſo fayre hornes / and haſt fere of the wulf / yf hit happed that he come ageyne / I ſhalle corryge hym wel / and ſhalle kepe hym wel / that he ſhalle haue no myght ouer me / ¶ And the wulf whiche held hys peas / and herkened what he ſayd / toke hym by the one legge thus ſayenge / what wordes ben theſe whiche thow profereſt & ſayſt brorder Hegoote / ¶ And whanne the hegote ſawe that he was taken / he beganne to ſaye to the wulf / Ha my lord / I ſaye no thynge / and haue pyte of me / I knowe wel / that it is my coulpe / And the wulf toke hym by the neck and ſtrangled hym / ¶ And therfore it is grete folye whan the feble maketh werre ageynſt the puyſſant and ſtronge.

¶ The bij fable is of the wulf and of the asse

MEn ought not to byleue lyghtly the counceylle of hym to whome men purpoſen to lette / As ye maye ſee by this fable / Of a wulf whiche ſomtyme mette with an Aſſe / to the whiche he ſayd / My broder I am hongry / wherfor I muſt nedes ete the / ¶ And thenne the Aſſe anſuerd ryght benyngly / My lord / with me thow mayſt doo what ſomeuer thow wylt / For yf thow eteſt me / thow ſhalt putte me oute of grete payne / But I preye the yf thow wylt ete me / that thou vouchelauf to ete me oute of the way / For wel thow knoweſt that I brynge home the rayſyns fro the vyne / and fro the feldes home the corne / ¶ Alſo wel thow knoweſt / that I bere home wood fro the foreſt / And whanne my maiſter wel do buyld ſomme edyffyce / I muſt go fetche the ſtones from the montayne / And at the other parte I bere the corne vnto the mylle / And after I bere home the floure / And for alle ſhort concluſions I was borne in a curſyd houre / For to alle payne and to alle grete labours I am ſubmytted & ſub-

get

get to hit/ For the whiche I wylle not that thow ete me here in the waye for the grete vergoyne and ſhame that therof myght come to me/ But I pray the/ and Inſtantly requyre the/ that thow wylt here my counceylle/ whiche is/ that we two go in to the foreſt/ and thow ſhalt bynde me by thy breſte/ as thy ſeruant/ And I ſhalle bynd the by thy neck as my mayſter And thow ſhalt lede me before the in to the wood where ſomeuer thow wylt/ to the ende that more ſecretely thow ete me/ to the whiche counceylle the wulf acorded and ſayd/ I wylle wel that it be donne ſo/ ¶ And whanne they were come in to the foreſt/ they bounde eche other in the maner as aboue is ſayd/ ¶ And whanne they were wel bounden/ the wulf ſayd to the Aſſe/ goo we where thow wylt/ and goo before for to ſhewe the waye/ And the aſſe wente before and ledde the wulf in to the ryght waye of his mayſters hows/ ¶ And whanne the wulf beganne to knowe the way/ he ſayd to the aſſe/ we goo not the ryght way/ to the whiche the aſſe anſuerd/ ¶ My lord ſaye not that/ For certaynly/ this is the ryght wey/ But for alle that/ the wulf wold haue gone backward/ But neuertheleſs the aſſe ledde hym vnto the hows of his mayſter/ ¶ And as his mayſter and alle his meyny ſawe how the Aſſe drewe the wulf

wulf after hym / and wold haue entred in to the hows they came oute with ſtaues and clubbes and ſmote on the wulf / ¶ And as one of them wold haue caſte and ſmyten a grete ſtroke vpon the wulfes heede / he brake the cord / wherwith he was bounden / And ſo ſcaped and ranne awey vpon the montayne ſore hurted and beten / And thenne the aſſe for the grete ioye he hadde of that he was ſo ſcaped fro the wulf / beganne to ſynge / And the wulf whiche was vpon the montayne / & herd the voys of thaſſe beganne to ſaye in hym ſelf / thow mayſt wel cry and calle / For I ſhalle kepe the wel another tyme / that thow ſhalt not bynd me as thow haſt done / but late gone / ¶ And therfore hit is grete folye to byleue the counceylle of hym / to whome men will lette / And to putte hym ſelf in his ſubiection / And he that ones hath begyled / muſt kepe hym fro another tyme that he be not deceyued / For he to whome men purpoſen to doo ſomme euylle tourn / ſyth men holden hym at auauntage / men muſte putte him ſelf at the vpper ſyde of hym / And after men ſhall purueye for their counceylle

¶ The viij fable is of the ſerpent and of the labourer /

THE Auctor of this booke reherceth ſuche another Fable and of ſuche ſentence / as the precydent / that is to wete / that men ſhold not byleue hym / to whome / men hath done eyylle / And ſayth that ſomtyme in herneſt tyme a labourer wente for to ſee his goodes in the feldes / the whiche mette on his way a ſerpent / And with a ſtaf whiche he bare in his hand ſmote the ſayd ſerpent / and gaf hym ſuche a ſtroke vpon the heed / that nyghe he ſlewe hym / ¶ And as the ſerpent felte hym ſelf ſo ſore hurted / he wente fro the man / and entryd in to his hole / And ſayd to the labourer / O euylle Frende / thow haſt bete me / But I warne the / that thow neuer byleue not hym / to the whiche thow haſt done ony eyylle / Of the whiche wordes the labourer made lytyl extyme and went forthe on his waye /

¶ It befelle thenne in the ſame yere / that this labourer wente ageyne by that waye / for to goo laboure and ere his ground / To whome the

the ſayd Serpent ſayd / ¶ Ha my frend / whyther gooſt thow / And the labourer anſwerd to hym / I goo ere and plowe my ground / And the Serpent ſayd to hym / ſowe not to moche / For this yere ſhalle be raynfull and grete habondaunce of waters ſhalle falle / But byleue not to hym / to whome thow haſt ſomtyme done ony euylle / And withoute ony wordes the labourer wente forthe on his waye / and byleued not the ſerpent / but made alle his ground to be cultyued and ered / and ſowed as moche corne as he myghte / In that ſame yere felle grete habondaunce of water / wherfore the ſayd labourer had but lytyl of his corne / For the mooſte parte of the corne that he had ſowen peryſſhed that ſame yere by cauſe of the grete rayne that felle that ſame yere / ¶ And the next yere after folowynge / as this labourer paſſyd before the repayre or dwellynge place of the ſayd Serpent and went for to ſowe his ground / the Serpent demaunded thenne of hym / My Frend whyther gooſt thow / ¶ And the labourer anſwerd / I goo for to ſowe my ground wyth corn and With other g[r]aynes ſuche as I hope that ſhalle ben neceſſary for me in tyme comynge / And thēne the Serpent ſaide to hym / My frend ſowe but lytyl corne / For the Somer next comynge ſhalle be ſoo grete and ſoo hote / that by the dryenes and hete /

hete / that alle the goodes ſowen on the erthe ſhall peryſſhe But byleue not hym / to whome thow haſt done ony euylle / ¶ And without ſayenge ony word / the labourer wente / and thought on the wordes of the Serpent / ¶ And wenynge / that the Serpent hadde ſoo ſayd for to deceyue hym / he ſowed as moche corne and other graynes / as he myght / ¶ And it happed that the Somer next folowynge was ſuche / as aboue is ſayd / Therfor the man was begyled / ¶ For he gadred that ſame yere nothynge / ¶ And the next yere after folowynge / the ſayd ſeaſon as the poure labourer wente ageyne for to ere and cultyue his ground the ſerpent ſawe hym come fro ferre / ¶ And as he came and paſſed before his repayre he aſked of the labourer in ſuche maner / ¶ My friend whyther gooſt thow / And the labourer anſuered / I goo cultyue and ere my ground / ¶ And thenne the ſerpent ſeyd to hym / My Frend ſowe not to moche ne to lytyl of corne and of other graynes / but ſowe bytwene bothe / Neuertheles byleue not hym / to the whiche thou haſt done euyl ¶ And I telle the that this yere ſhalle be the most temperate and the mooſt fertyle of alle maner of corne / that euer thow ſaweſt / And whanne the labourer hadde herd theſe wordes / he wente his waye / and dyd as the Serpent had ſayd / And

And that yere he gadred moche good / by cauſe of the good diſpoſycion of the ſeaſon and tyme / ¶ And on a daye of the ſame yere / the ſerpent ſawe the ſayd labourer comynge fro the herueſt / to whome he came ageynſte / And ſayd / Now ſaye me my good Frend / Haſt thow not fond now grete plente of goodes / as I had told to the byfore And the labourer anſuerd and ſayd ye certaynly / wherof I thanke the / ¶ And thenne the Serpent demaunded of hym Remuneracion or reward / ¶ And the labourer thenne demaunded what he wold haue of hym / And the Serpent ſayd I ne demaunde of the nothynge / but only that to morowe on the mornyng thow wylt ſende me a dyſſh ful of mylk by ſom of thy children / ¶ And thenne the ſerpent ſhewed to the labourer the hole of his dwellyng / & ſayd to hym / telle thy ſone that he brynge the mylke hyther / but take good heede to that that other whyle I told to the / that thow byleueſt not hym / to whome thou haſt done euylle / ¶ And anone after whanne theſe thynges were ſayd / the labourer wente homeward / and in the morninge next folowynge / he betoke to his ſone a dyſſhe full of mylke / whiche he brought to the ſerpent / and ſette the dyſſhe before the hool / And anone the ſerpent came oute and ſlewe the child

child through his venym / and when the labourer cam fro the feld / and that he came before the repayre or dwellinge of the ſerpent / he fond his ſonne whiche laye doune deed on the erthe / Thenne beganne the ſayd labourer to crye with a hyghe voys / as he that was ful of ſorowe and of heuyneſſe ſayinge ſuche wordes / Ha curſed & euylle ſerpent / vermyn and fals traytour / thow haſt deceyued me / Ha wycked and deceytfull beeſt / ful of all contagyous euyll thow haſt ſorowfully ſlayne my ſone /

¶ And thenne the ſerpente ſayd to hym / I wylle well / that thow knowe / that I haue not ſlayne hym ſorowfully / ne withoute cauſe / but for to auenge me of that / that thow hurteſt me on that other daye withoute cauſe / and haſt not amended hit / Haſt thow now memorye / how ofte I ſayd to the / that thow ſholdeſt not byleue hym / to whome thow haſt done eyyll / haue now thenne in thy memorye / that I am auengyd of the /

¶ And thus this fable ſheweth how men ought not to byleue ne bere feythe to them / to whome men hath done ſomme harme or euylle.

¶ The ix fable is of the foxe / of the wulf / and of the lyon /

IF hit be ſoo that ony hath ben adommaged by other he ought not to take vengeaūce by the tong in gyuyng Iniuryous wordes / and the cauſe why / is by cauſe / that ſuche vengeaunce is diſhoneſt. As to us reherceth this preſent fable / Somtyme was a foxe / that ete fyſſhe in a Ryuer / ¶ It happed / that the wulf came that waye / ¶ And whanne he ſawe the foxe / whiche ete with ſo grete appetyte / He beganne to ſaye / My broder gyue me ſomme fyſſhe / And the foxe anſuerd to hym / Allas my lord / It behouveth not that ye ete the releef of my table / but for the worſhip of your perſone I ſhall counceylle yow wel / Doo ſoo moche to gete yow a baſket / And I ſhalle teche yow how men ſhalle take fyſſhes / to thende / that ye may take ſomme whan ye ſhalle be hongry / And the wulf wente in to the ſtreete / and ſtalle a baſket / whiche he brought with hym / the foxe tooke the baſket / and bound it with a cord at the wulfs taylle / ¶ And whanne

whanne he was wel bounden / the foxe ſayd to the wulf / goo thow by the Ryuer / and I ſhalle lede and take hede to the baſket / And the wulf dyde as the foxe had hym do / ¶ And as the wulf was goynge within the water / the foxe fylled the baſket fulle of ſtones by his malyce / ¶ And whan the baſket was full / the foxe ſayd to the wulf / Certaynly my lord / I maye no more lyfte ne hold the baſket / ſo full it is of fyſſhe / ¶ And the wulf wenynge that the foxe had ſayd truthe / profered ſuch wordes / ſayenge / I render graces and thankes to god / that I maye ones ſee thyn hyghe and excellente wyſedome in the arte and craſte of fyſſhynge / ¶ And thenne the foxe ſayd to hym / My lord abyde me here / And I ſhalle fetche ſome to helpe vs for to haue and take the fyſſhe oute of the baſket / And in ſayenge theſe wordes / the foxe ranne in to the ſtrete / where he fond men / to whome he ſayd in this manere / My lordes what doo ye here / why are yow werkleſs / ſee yonder the wulf / which ete your ſheep / your lambes / and your beeſtes / and yet now he taketh your fyſſhes oute of the Ryuer / and ete them / ¶ And thenne alle the men came to gyder / ſomme with ſlynges / and ſomme with bowes / and other with ſtaues vnto the Ryuer / where they fond the wulf / whiche they bete

outragyouſſly

outragyouſſly / ¶ And whanne the poure wulf ſawe hym thus oppreſſed / & vexed with ſtrokes beganne with alle his ſtrengthe & myghte to drawe / and ſuppoſed to haue caryed the fyſſhe awey / but ſo ſtrongly he drewe / that he drewe and pulled his taylle fro his ers / and thus he ſcaped vnnethe with his lyf / ¶ In the mene-whyle thenne happed / that the lyon whiche was kynge ouer alle beeſtes felle in a grete ſekeneſſe / for the whiche cauſe euery beeſt wente for to ſee hym / as theyr lord / ¶ And when the wulf would haue gone thyder / he ſalewed his lord / ſaying thus to hym / My kynge I ſalewe yow / pleaſe it you to knowe that I haue gone round aboute the countre and prouynce / and in alle places of hit for to ſerche ſomme medycynes prouffitable for yow / and to recowere your helthe / but nothyng I haue found good for your ſekeneſſe / but only the ſkynne of a foxe fyers and prowde and malycious / whiche is youre body medycynal / but he dayneth not to come hyther to ſee you But ye ſhalle calle hym to a counceylle / and whanne ye hold hym / lete his ſkynne be taken from hym / And thenne lete hym renne where he wylle / and that fayr ſkynne which is ſo holſome / ye ſhalle make hit to be ſette and bound vpon your bely / And within fewe dayes after hit

ſhalle

ſhalle rendre yow in as good helthe / as euer ye were / ¶ And whanne he had ſayd theſe wordes / he departed fro the lyon and toke his leue / but neuer he had ſuppoſed / that the foxe had herd hym / but he had / For he was within a terryer nyghe to the lodgys of the lyon / where he herd alle the propoſycion of the wulf / to the whiche he dyd put remedye and grete prouyſyon / For as ſoone as the wulf was departed fro the lyon / the foxe wente in to the feldes / And in a hyghe way he fond a grete donghyll / within the whiche he put hym ſelf / ¶ And as he ſuppoſed after his aduys to be defowled and dagged ynough / came thus arayed in to the pytte of the lyon / the whiche he ſalewed as he oughte to haue done to his lord / ſayenge to hym in this manere / Syre kynge god yeue good helthe / And the lyon anſuerd to hym God ſalewe the ſwete frend / come nyghe me and kyſſe me / & after I ſhalle telle to the ſomme ſecrete / whiche I wylle not that euery man knowe / to whome the foxe ſayd in this maner Ha a ſyre kynge be not diſpleaſyd / for I am to fowle arayed and al to dagged / by cauſe of the grete way / whiche I haue gone / ſekynge al aboute ſomme good medycyne for you / wherfore it behoueth not me / for to be ſo nyghe your perſone For the ſtenche of the donge myght

wel

wel greue you for the grete ſekeneſſe that ye haue / but dere ſyre / yf hit pleaſe to the or euer I come nerer to your Royal mageſte I ſhalle goo bathe me and make me fayre and clene / And thenne I ſhall come ageyne to preſente my ſelf byfore thy noble perſone / And notwithſtondynge al this / alſo er I goo / pleaſe the to wete & knowe that I come from alle the contrees here aboute / and from alle the Royalmes adiacent to this prouynce / for to ſee yf I coude fynde ſomme good medycyn duſynge and nedeful to thy ſikeneſſe / and for to recouere thy helthe / but certaynly I haue foūd no better coūceylle than the coūceylle of an aūcyent greke with a grete & long berd / a man of grete wyſdom / ſage & worthy to be prayſed / the whiche ſayd to me / how in this prouynce is a wulf withoute taylle / the whiche hath loſt his taylle by the vertue of the grete medycyn whiche is within hym / For the whiche thynge it is nedeful and expedyent / that ye doo make this wulf to come to yow for the recoueraunce of the heſthe of your fayr and noble body / And whan he is come dyſſymylle and calle hym to counceylle / ſayenge that it ſhalle be for his grete worſhip & proffite / & as he ſhal be nyghe vnto yow caſt on hym your armed feet / and as ſwetely as ye maye pulle the ſkynne fro the body of hym & kepe it hoole /

ſauf

ſauf only that ye ſhalle leue the heed and the feet / And thenne lete hym gone his way to ſeche his auenture / And forthwith whan ye ſhalle haue that ſkynne / al hot and warme ye ſhal do bynd hit al aboute your bely / And after that or lytyll tyme be paſſed / your helthe ſhalle be reſtored to yow / and ye ſhal be as hole as euer in your lyf ye were / ¶ And thenne the foxe toke his leue of the kynge / and departed / and wente ageyne in to his terryer / ¶ Soone after came then the wulf for to ſee the lyon / And Incontynent the lyon called hym to counceylle / and caſtynge ſoftly his feet vpon hym dyſpoylled the wulf of his ſkynne ſauf the ſkynne of his hede and of his feet / And after the lyon bound it al warme about his bely / ¶ And the wulf ranne aweye ſkynles / wherfore he had ynough to doo to defende and put from hym the flyes / whiche greued hym ſore / And for the grete deſtreſſe that he felte by cauſe of the flyes / that thus ete his fleſſhe / he as wood beganne to renne / and paſſyd vnder an hylle / vpon the whiche the foxe was / ¶ And after whanne the foxe ſawe hym / he beganne to crye / and calle / lawhyng after the wulf / and mocked / and ſayd to hym / who arte thow that paſſeſt there before with ſuche a fayre hood on thy heed and with ryght fayr glouues in thyn handes / Herke herke / what I

ſhalle

ſhalle ſaye to the / whan thow wente & cameſt by the kynges hows / thow werte bleſſed of the lord / & whan thou were at the Court thow herkeneſt and alſo ſayeſt many good wordes and good talkynge of al the world /

¶ And therfore my godſep be it euyl or good / thow muſte al lete paſſe / and goo / and haue pacyence in thyn aduerſyte /

¶ And thus this fable ſheweth vnto vs / that yf ony be hurted or dommaged / by ſomme other he muſt not auenge hym ſelf by his tonge for to make ony treſon / ne for to ſay of other ony harme ne open blaſphemye / For he ought to conſydere / that who ſo euer maketh the pytte redy for his broder / ofte it happeth that he hym ſelf falleth in the ſame / and is beten with the ſame rodde that he maketh for other

¶ The x fable is of the wulf whiche made a fart

IT is folye to wene more / than men ought to doo / For what ſomeuer a foole thynketh hit ſemeth to hym that hit ſhalle be / As it appiereth by this fable / of a wulf / whiche ſomtyme roſe erly in a mornynge / And after that he was ryſen vp fro his bedde / as he retched hym ſelf / made a grete fart / and beganne to ſaye to hym ſelf / bleſſed be god therfore / theſe ben good tydynges / this daye / I ſhalle be wel fortunate and happy / as myn ers ſyngeth to me / And thenne he departed from his lodgys / and biganne to walke and goo / & as he wente on his way he fonde a ſak ful of talowe / whiche a woman had lete falle / and with his foote he torned hit vpſo doune / and ſayd to hym / I ſhalle not ete the / For thow ſholdeſt hurte my tendre ſtomak / and more is / I ſhall this day haue better mete / and more delycious / For well I knowe this by myn ers / whiche dyd ſynge it to me / And ſayenge theſe wordes went his way / And anone

anone after he fond a grete pyece of bakon wel ſalted / the whiche he tourned and retourned vp ſodoune / And whan he had torned and retorned hit longe / ynough / he ſayd / I dayne not to ete of this mete / by cauſe that hit ſhold cauſe me for to drynke moche / for it is to ſalte And as myn ers ſonge to me laſt I ſhalle ete this ſame day better and more delycious mete / ¶ And thenne he beganne to walke ferther / And as he entryd in to a fayr medowe / he ſawe a mare / and her yong foole with her / and ſayd to hym ſelf alone / I rendre thankes and graces to the goddes of the godes that they ſend me / For wel I wyſt and was certayne / that this daye I ſhold fynde ſomme precious mete / And thenne he came nyghe the mare and ſayd to her / Certaynly my ſuſter I ſhalle ete thy child / And the mare anſuerd to hym / My broder doo what ſomeuer hit ſhalle pleaſe the / But fyrſt I praye the that one playſyre thow wylt do to me / I haue herd ſaye that thow art a good Cyrurgyen / wherfore I praye the / that thou wylt hele me of my foote / I ſaye to the my good broder / that yeſter daye as I wente within the foreſt / a thorne entryd in to one of my feet behynd / the whiche greueth me ſore / I praye the / that or thow ete my fool / thow wylt drawe and haue it oute of my foote / And the wulf anſwerd to the mare that ſhalle I doo gladly my good ſuſter / ſhewe me thy

thy foote / ¶ And as the mare ſhewed his foote to the wulf / ſhe gaf to the wulf ſuche a ſtroke bytwexe bothe his eyen / that alle his hede was aſtonyed and felle doune to the ground / and a longe ſpace was the wulf lyenge vpon the erthe / as deed / And whanne he was come to hym ſelf ageyne / and that he coud ſpeke / he ſayd / I care not for this myſhap / For wel I wote that yet this day I ſhalle ete / and be fylled of delycious mete / And in ſayenge theſe wordes lyft hym ſelf vp / and wente aweye / ¶ And whanne he had walked and gone a whyle / he fond two rammes within a medowe whiche with theyr hornes laũched eche other / And the wulf ſayd to hymſelf / Bleſſed be god / that now I ſhal be wel fedde / he thenne came nyghe the two rammes / & ſaid / Certaynly I ſhall ete the one of you two And one of them ſayd to hym / My lord doo alle that it pleſe yow / but fyrſt ye muſt gyue vs the ſentence of a proceſſe of a plee whiche is bytwixe vs bothe / And the wulf anſuerd / that with ryght a good wylle he wold doo hit / And after ſayd to them / My lordes telle my your reſons and caas / to thende that the better I may gyue the ſentence of your dyferent and queſtion / And thenne one of them beganne to ſay / My lord / this medowe was bylongynge to our fader / And by cauſe that he deyde without

oute

oute makynge ony ordenaunce or teſtament / we be now in debate and ſtryf for the partynge of hit / wherfore we praye the that thow vouche-ſauf to accorde oure dyferent / ſo that pees be made bytwene vs / And thenne the wulf demaunded of the rammes how theyr queſtion myght be accorded / Ryght wel ſayd one of them / by one manere / whiche I ſhal telle to the / yf hit pleaſe to the to here me / we two ſhalle be at the two endes of the medowe / and thow ſhalt be in the myddes of it / And fro thende of the medowe / we bothe at ones ſhalle renne toward the / And he that fyrſt ſhalle come to the / ſhalle be lord of the medowe / And the laſt ſhalle be thyn / Wel thene ſayd the wulf / thyn aduys is good and wel purpoſed / late ſee now who fyrſt ſhalle come to me / Thenne wente the two rammes to renne toward the wulf / And with alle theyr myght came and gaf to hym ſuche two ſtrokes bothe at ones ageynſt bothe his ſydes / that almoſt they brake his herte within his bely / & then fyll doune the poure wulf alle aſwowned / And the rammes wente theyr way / ¶ And whanne he was come ageyn to hym ſelf / he took courage and departed / ſayenge to hym ſelf / I care not for alle this Iniurye and ſhame / For as myn ers dyde ſynge to me / yet ſhalle I this day ete ſomme good and delycious mete /

¶ He

¶ He had not long walked / whanne he fond a ſowe / and her ſmal pygges with her / And Incontynent as he ſawe her / he ſayd / bleſſed be god of that I ſhalle this daye ete and fylle my bely with precious metes / and ſhalle haue good fortune / And in that ſayenge approched to the ſowe / & ſayd to her / My ſuſter I muſt ete ſomme of thy yonge pygges And the ſowe wente and ſayd to hym / my lord I am content of alle that / whiche pleaſeth to yow / But or ye ete them / I praye yow that they maye be baptyſed and made clene in pure and fayre water / And the wulf ſayd to the ſowe / Shewe me thenne the water / And I ſhalle waſſhe and baptyſe them wel / And thenne the ſowe wente and ledde hym at a ſtange or pond where as was a fayr mylle ¶ And as the wulf was vpon the lytyl brydge of the ſayd mylle / and that he wold haue take one pygge / the ſowe threwe the wulf in to the water with her hede / and for the ſwyftneſſe of the water / he muſt nedes paſſe vnder the whele of the mylle / And god wote yf the wynges of the mylle bete hym wel or not / And as ſoone as he myght / he ranne away / And as he ranne ſeyd to hym ſelf / I care not for ſoo lytyl a ſhame / ne therfore I ſhall not be bette / but that I ſhalle yet this daye ete my bely full of metes delycious / as myn ers dyd ſynge it erly

to

to me / ¶ And as he paſſed thurgh the ſtrete / he ſawe ſomme ſheep / and as the ſhepe ſawe hym / they entryd in to a ſtable / ¶ And whan the wulf came there he ſayd to them in this manere / God kepe you my ſuſters / I muſt ete one of yow / to thende / that I may be fylled and raſſaſyed of my grete honger / And thenne one of them ſayd to hym / Certaynly my lord / ye are welcome to paſſe / For we ben comen hyder for to hold a grete ſolempnyte / wherfore we alle praye yow / that ye pontyfycally wylle ſynge And after the ſeruyſe complete and done / doo what ye wyll of the one of vs / & thenne the wulf for vayn glory / faynyng to be a prelate beganne to ſynge and to howle before the ſheep / ¶ And whanne the men of the toune herd the voys of the wulf / they came to the ſtable with grete ſtaues and with grete dogges / and wonderly they wounded the wulf / and almoſt brought hym to deth / that with grete payne he coude goo / neuertheles he ſcaped / and wente vnder a grete tree / vpon the whiche tree was a man whiche hewe of the bowes of the tree / The wulf thenne beganne to ſyghe ſore / and to make grete ſorowe of his euylle fortune / and ſayd / Ha Jupiter how many euyls haue I had and ſuffred this daye / but wel I preſume and knowe / that hit is by me and by myn owne cauſe / and by my

my proud thoughte / For the daye in the morn-ynge I fond a ſak ful of talowe / the whiche I dayned not but only ſmelle hit. And after I fond a grete pyeece of bakon / the whiche I wold neuer ete for drede of grete thurſt and for my folyſhe thought / And therfore yf euylle is ſyn happed to me it is wel beſtowed and em-ployed / My fader was neuer medecyn ne leche / and alſo I haue not ſtudyed and lerned in the ſcyence of medycyn or phiſyke / therfore if it happeth euylle to me / whanne I wold drawe the thorne oute of the mares fote it is wel em-ployed / ¶ Item my fader was neuer neyther patryarke ne Biſſhop / and alſo I was neuer lettred / and yet I preſumed / and toke on me for to ſacryfyce and to ſynge before the goddes / fayneyng my ſelf to be a prelate / but after my deſerte I was wel rewarded / ¶ Item my fader was no legiſt ne neuer knewe the lawes / ne alſo man of Juſtyce / and to gyue ſentence of a plee / I wold entremete me / and fayned my ſelf grete Juſtycer / but I knewe neyther / a / ne / b / ¶ And yf therfore euylle is come to me / it is of me as of ryght it ſhold be / O Jupyter I am worthy of gretter punycyon whanne I haue offenſed in ſo many maners / ſende thow now to me from thyn hyghe throne a ſwerd or other

vepen /

vepen / wherwith I maye ſtrongly punyſſhe and bete me by grete penaunce / For wel worthy I am to receyue a gretter deſciplyne / And the good man whiche was vpon the tree / herkened alle theſe wordes and deuyſes / and ſayd no word / ¶ And whanne the wulf had fynyſſhed alle his ſyghes and complayntes / the good man toke his axe / wherwith he had kytte awey the dede braunches fro the tre / and caſt it vpon the wulf / and it felle vpon his neck in ſuche maner that the wulf torned vpſodoun the feet vpward and laye as had ben dede / And whan the wulf myght releue and dreſſe hym ſelf / he loked and byheld vpward to the heuen / and beganne thus to crye / Ha Jupiter I ſee now wel that thow haſt herd and enhaunced my prayer / and thenne he perceyued the man whiche was vpon the tree / & wel wende that he had ben Jupiter / And thenne with alle his myght he fledde towards the foreſt ſore wounded / and rendred hym ſelf to humylyte / and more meke and humble he was afterwards than euer before he had ben fyers ne prowde / ¶ And by this fable men may knowe and ſee that moche reſteth to be done of that / that a foole thynketh / And hit ſheweth to vs / that whan ſomme good cometh to ſomme / it ought not to be reffuſed / For it

maye

maye not ben recouerd as men wyll / And alſo it ſheweth / hou none ought to auaunte hym to doo a thynge whiche he can not doo / but therfore euery man ought to gouerne and rewle hym ſelf after his eſtate and faculte /

¶ The xj fable is of the enuyous dogge /

None ought not to haue enuye of good of other / As it appiereth by this fable / Of a dogge whiche was enuyous / and that ſomtyme was within a ſtable of oxen / the whiche was ful of heye / This dogge kept the oxen that they ſhold not entre in to theyr ſtable / and that they ſhold not ete of the ſayd hey / And thenne the oxen ſayd to hym / thow arte wel peruers and euylle to haue enuye of the good / the whiche is to vs nedefull and prouffitable / and thow haſt of hit nought to doo / for thy kynde is not to ete no hey / And thus he dyd of a grete bone / the whiche he held at his mouthe / and wold not leue hit by cauſe and for enuye of another dogge / whiche was therby / And therfore kepe the wel fro the company or felauſhip of an enuyous body / For to haue to doo with hym hit is moche peryllous and dyffycyle / As to vs is wel ſhewen by Lucyfer

¶ The xij fable is of the wulf and of the hongry dogge /

SUche ſuppoſen ſomtyme wynne that leſen / As hit appiereth by this Fable / For hit is ſayd comunly that as moche deſpendeth the nygard as the large / As hit appiereth by this fable of a man whiche had a grete herd of ſheep / And alſo he had a dogge for to kepe them fro the wulues / To this dogge he gaf no mete / for the grete auaryce whiche held hym / And therfore the wulf on a daye came to the dogge and demaunded of hym the rayſon / why he was ſoo lene / and ſayd to hym / I ſee wel that thow dyeſt for honger / by cauſe that thy mayſter gyueth the no mete / by his grete ſcarcyte / but yf thow wylt byleue me I ſhalle gyue to the good counceylle / And the dogge ſayd to hym / Certaynly I myſter gretely of good counceylle / ¶ Thenne the wulf ſayd to hym / This ſhalt thow doo / Lete me take a lambe / And whanne I ſhalle haue hit I ſhalle renne awey / and whanne thow ſhalt ſee me renne / make thenne

thenne ſemblant to renne after me / and lete thy ſelf falle faynynge that thow canſt not ouertake me / for lack and fawte of mete / whiche maketh the ſo feble / And thus whanne the ſheepherd ſhalle ſee that thow mayſt not haue the lambe fro me by cauſe of the grete febleneſſe and debylyte of thy lene body / he ſhell telle to thy lord that thow myghteſt not ſocoure the lambe / by cauſe that thow arte ſo ſore ahongryd / and by this means thow ſhalt haue mete thy bely ful / ¶ The dogge thenne acorded this with the wulf / and eche of them made and dyde as aboue is ſayd / ¶ And whane the ſheep herd ſawe the dogge falle / ſuposed wel / that honger was a cauſe of it Forthe whiche cauſe whanne one of the ſheep herdes came home he told hit to his mayſter / And whan the mayſter vnderſtood hit / he ſayd as a man wroth for ſhame / I wylle that fro hens forthon he haue breed ynough / ¶ And thenne euery daye the ſayd dogge hadde ſoppes of brede / and of drye breed he hadde ynough / ¶ Thenne the dogge toke ſtrengthe / and vygour ageyne / ¶ It happed within a lytyl whyle after / that the wulf came ageyne to the dogge / and ſayd to hym / I perceyue wel / that I gaf to the good counceylle / And the dogge ſayd to the wulf / My broder thow ſayſt ſoothe / wherfore I thanke the moche / For of hit I hadde grete nede /

¶ And

¶ And thenne the wulf ſayd to hym / yf thow wylt I ſhall gyue to the yet better counceylle / And the dogge anſuerd hym with ryght a good wylle I ſhalle here hit / And yf hit be good I ſhalle do after hit / ¶ Thenne ſayd the wulf to hym Lete me take yet another lambe / and doo thy dylygence for to haue hit fro me / and to byte me / and I ſhalle ouerthrowe the thy feet vpward / as he that hath no puyſſaunce ne ſtrength withoute hurtynge of thy ſelf / byleue me hardyly / and wel hit ſhalle happe to the / And whanne thy mayſters ſeruaunts ſhalle haue ſene thy dylygence / they ſhal ſhewen hit to thy mayſter how that thow ſhal kepe ful wel his ſolde / yf thow be wel nouryſſhed / ¶ And thenne the dogge anſuerd to the wulf that he was contente / And as hit was ſayd / ryght ſo hit was done / and bothe of them maad good dylygence The wulf bere aweye the lambe / and the dogge renne after hym / and ouertook hym / & bote hym fayntly / And the wulf ouerthrewe the dogge vpſodoune to the ground / And whan the ſheepherdes ſawe gyue ſuche ſtrokes amonge the dogge & the Wulf / ſayd Certaynly we haue a good dogge / we muſte telle his dylygence to our mayſter / and ſoo they dyd / & how he bote the wulf / and how he was ouerthrowen / And yet ſayd Certaynly yf he hadde

hadde

hadde euer mete ynough / the wulf had not borne awey the lambe / Thenne the lord commaunded to gyue hym plente of mete / wherof the dogge took ageyne al ſtrengthe and vertue / And within a whyle after the wulf came ageyne to the dogge / and ſayd to hym in this maner / My broder haue I not gyuen to the good counceylle / And thenne the dogge anſuerd to hym / Certaynly ye / wherof I thanke yow / And the wulf ſayd to the dogge / I praye the my broder and my good frend that thow wylt yet gyue another lambe / and the dogge ſayd to hym / Certaynly my broder / wel hit maye ſuffyſe the to haue had tweyne of them / ¶ Thenne ſayd the wulf to the dogge / ¶ At the left waye I maye haue one for my labour and ſallarye / That ſhalt thow not haue ſayd the dogge / Haſt thow not had good ſallarye for to haue hadde two lambes oute of my mayſters herd / ¶ And the wulf anſuerd to hym ageyne / My brother gyue hit me yf hit pleaſe the / ¶ And after ſayd the dogge to hym / Nay I wylle not / And yf thow takeſt hit ageynſte my wylle / I promytte and warne the / that neuer after tyme thow ſhalt ete none / And thenne the wulf ſayd to hym / Allas my broder I deye for honger / Counceylle me for goddys loue what I ſhalle doo / And the dogge ſayd to hym / I ſhal coũceylle the wel a

walle

walle of my mayſters celer is fallen doune / go thyder this nyght and entre in hit / and there thow mayſt both ete and drynke after thy playſyr / For bothe breed fleſſhe and wyn ſhalt thow fynde at plente there within / And thenne the wulf ſayd to hym / Allas my broder / beware wel thenne / that thow accuſe ne deceyue me not / And the dogge anſuerd / I waraunt the / but doo thy faythe ſoo pryuely / that none of my felawes knowe not of hit / ¶ And the wulf came at the nyght / and entryd in to the celer / and / ete and dranke at his playſyre / In ſo moche that he wexed dronke And whanne he hadde dronke ſoo moche / that he was dronke / He ſayd to hym ſelf / whanne the vylaynes ben fylled wyth metes / and that they ben dronke / they ſynge theyr ſonges / and I wherfore ſhold I not ſynge / ¶ And thenne he beganne to crye and to howle / And the dogges herd the voys of hym wherfore they beganne to barke and to howle / And the ſeruaunts whiche herd them ſayd / It is the wulf / whiche is entryd within the celer / And thenne they al to gyder wenten thyder / and kylled the wulf / And therfore more deſpendeth the nygard than the large / For auaryce was neuer good / For many one ben whiche dare not ete ne drynke as nature requyreth / But neuertheles euery one oughte

to

to uſe and lyue prudently of all ſuche goodes as god ſendeth to hym / This fable alſo ſheweth to vs / that none ought to do ageynſte his kynde / as of the wulf whiche wexed dronke / for the whiche cauſe he was ſlayne

¶ The xiij fable maketh mencyon of the fader and of his thre children

HE is not wyſe / whiche for to haue vanyte and his pleſyr taketh debate or ſtryf / As hit appiereth by this fable / Of a man whiche hadde thre children / and at the houre of his dethe he byquethed / and gaf to them his herytage or lyuehode / that is to wete a grete pere tree / a gote & a mylle / ¶ And whanne the fader was deed / the bretheren aſſembled them thre to gyder / and wente before the Juge for to parte their lyuehode / and ſayd to the Juge / My lord the Juge / Oure fader is dede whiche hath byquethed to vs thre bretheren al his herytage and as moche of hit ſhold haue the one as the other And thenne the Juge demaunded / what was theyr lyuehode / And they anſuerd a pere tree / a gote and a mylle / And thenne the Juge ſayd to them / that they ſhold ſette and make partyes egal of your lyuelede / And the one to haue as moche of hit as the other / hit is a thynge moche dyffycyle to doo / but to your aduys how ſhold ye parte it / And

And thenne the eldeſt of the three bretheren ſpake and ſayd / I ſhalle take fro the pere tree alle that is croked and vpright / And the ſecond ſayd / I ſhalle take fro the pere tree alle that is grene and drye / And the thyrd ſayd I ſhalle haue alle the rote / the pulle or maſte and alle the branches of the pere tree / ¶ And thenne the Juge ſayd to them / He that thenne ſhalle haue the moſt parte of the tree / lete hym be Juge / For I ne none other may know ne vnderſtande who ſhalle haue the more or leſſe parte / And therfore he that can or ſhalle proue more openly / that he hath the moſt parte ſhal be lord of the tree / ¶ And after the Juge demaunded of them / how that theyr fader had deuyſed to them the gote / And they ſayd to hym / he that ſhalle make the fayreſt prayer and requeſt muſt haue the gote / And thene the fyrſte broder made his requeſt / and ſayd in this manere / wold god that the goot were now ſoo grete that ſhe myght drynke alle the water whiche is vnder the cope of heuen / And that whanne ſhe hadde dronken it / ſhe ſhold yet be ſore thurſty ¶ The ſecond ſayd / I ſuppoſe that the gote ſhalle be myn / For a fayrer demaunde or requeſt than thyn is I ſhalle now make / ¶ I wold / that alle the hempe / and alle the Flaxe and alle the wulle of the worlde were made in

one

one threed alone / And that the Gote were ſo grete / that with that ſame threde men myght not bynde one of his legges / ¶ Thenne ſayd thirdde / yet ſhalle be myn the gote / ¶ For I wolde / that he were ſoo grete / that yf an Egle were at the vppermoſt of the heuen / he myght occupye and haue thenne as moche place as the Egle myght loke and ſee in hyght / in lengthe and in breed / ¶ And thenne the Juge ſayde to them thre / who is he of yow thre / that hath maade the fayreſt prayer / Certaynly I nor none other canne not ſaye ne gyue the Jugement / And therfore the goote ſhalle be bylongynge to hym that of hit ſhalle ſay the trouthe ¶ And the Mylle how was hit deuyſed by your Fader for to be parted amonge yow thre / ¶ And they anſuerde and ſayde to the Juge / He that ſhalle be mooſt lyer / mooſte euylle and moſt ſlowe ought to haue hit / ¶ Thenne ſay the eldeſt ſone / I am mooſt ſlowfull / For many yeres I haue dwellyd in a grete hous / and laye vnder the conduytes of the ſame / oute of the whiche felle vpon me alle the fowle waters / as pyſſe / dyſſhe water / and alle other fylthe that wonderly ſtanke / In ſo moche that al my fleſſhe was roten therof / and myn eyen al blynd / and the durt vnder my back was a foot hyghe / And yet by my grete ſlouthe I hadde leuer to abyde there / than to tourne me / and haue lyfte me vp ¶ The

¶ The ſecond ſayd / I ſuppoſe wel / that the mylle ſhalle be myn / For yf I had faſted twenty yere / And yf I hadde come to a table couerd of al maner of precious and delyate metes / therof I myght wel ete yf I wold take of the beſt / I am ſo ſlouthfull that I maye not ete Withoute one ſhold putte the mete in to my mouthe /

¶ And the thyrde ſayd / the mylle ſhalle be myn / For I am yet a gretter lyar and more ſlouthfull / than ony of yow bothe / For yf I hadde ben athurſt vnto the dethe / And yf I found thenne my ſelf within a fayre water into the neck / I wold rather deye / than to meue ones my heed for to drynke therof only one drop / ¶ Thenne ſayd the Juge to them / Ye wote not what ye ſaye / For I nor none other maye not wel vnderſtande yow / But the cauſe I remytte and put amonge yow thre / And thus they wente withoute ony ſentence / For to folyſhe demaunde behoueth a folyſhe anſuere

¶ And therfore they ben fooles that wylle plete ſuche vanyte one ageynſte other / And many one ben fallen therfore in grete pouerte / For for a lytyl thynge ought to be made a lytyl plee

¶ The xiij fable is of the wulf and of the fore

NOne maye not be mayſter without he haue be fyrſte a diſciple / As hit appiereth by this Fable / Of a Foxe whiche came toward a wulf / and ſayd to hym / My lord I praye yow that ye wylle be my godſep / And the wulf anſuerd / I am content / And the foxe toke to hym his ſone prayenge hym that to his ſone he wold ſhewe and lerne good doctryne / the whiche the wulf tooke / and wente with hym vpon a montayne / And thenne he ſayd to the lytyll foxe whanne the beeſtes ſhalle come to the feldes calle me / And the foxe wente and ſawe fro the top of the hylle / how the beeſtes were comynge to the feldes / and forth with he wente and called his godfader / and ſayd My godfader the beeſtes comen in to the feldes / And the wulf demaunded of hym / what beſtes are they / and the fox anſuerd / they be bothe kyne & ſwyn to gyder / Wel ſayd the wulf / I gyue no force for them / lete them go for the dogges ben with them / And ſoone after the foxe dyd loke on another ſyde / and perceyued the mare whiche

wente

wente to the feldes / and he wente to his godfader & ſayd / godfader the mare is goo to the feldes / & the wulf demaunded of hym where aboute is ſhe / And the foxe anſuered ſhe is by the foreſt / And the wulf ſayd / Now go we to dyner / And the wulf with his godſone entryd in to the wood / and came to the mare / ¶ The wulf perceyued wel and ſawe a yonge colt / whiche was by his moder / the wulf tooke hym by the neck with his teethe and drewe hit within the wood / and ete & deuoured hym bytwene them bothe / ¶ And whan they had wel eten the godſon ſayd to his godfader / My godfader I commaude yow to god and moche I thanke yow your doctrine / For wel ye haue taught me / in ſo moche / that now I am a grete clerke / & now I wylle goo toward my moder / And thenne the wulf ſayd to his godſon / My godſone yf thow goſt awey / thow ſhalt repente the therfore / For thow haſt not yet wel ſtudyed / and knoweſt not yet the Sylogyſmes / ¶ Ha my godfader ſayd the Foxe / I knowe wel al / ¶ And the wulf ſayd to hym / Sythe thow wylt goo / to god I commaunde the /

¶ And whanne the Foxe was come toward his moder / ſhe ſayd to hym / Certaynly / thow haſt not yet ſtudyed ynough / ¶ And he thenne ſayd to her / Moder I am ſoo grete a clerke that

I can caſt the deuylle fro the clyf/ Lete vs go chace/ and ye ſhalle ſee yf I haue lerned ought or not/ ¶ And the yong foxe wold haue done as his godfader the wulf dede/ and ſaid to his moder/ make good watche/ ¶ And whanne the beeſtes ſhalle come to the feld/ lete me haue therof knowlege/ And his moder ſayd/ wel my ſone ſo ſhalle I doo/ She maade good watche/ And whanne ſhe ſawe that bothe kyne and ſwyne wente to the feldes/ ſhe ſayd thenne to hym My ſone the kyne and the ſwyn to gyder ben in the feldes/ And he anſuerd/ My moder of them I retche not/ lete them goo/ for the dogges kepe them wel/ ¶ And within a ſhort whyle after/ the moder ſawe come the mare nyghe vnto a wode/ and wente/ and ſayd to her ſone/ My ſone the mare is nyghe the wood And he anſuerd/ My moder theſe ben good tydynges/ Abyde ye here/ For I goo to fetche our dyner/ and wente and entred in to the Wode/ And after wold doo as his godfader dyd before/ and wente and tooke the mare by the neck/ But the mare tooke hym with her teeth/ and bare hym to the ſheepherd And the moder cryed from the top of the hylle/ My ſone lete goo the mare/ and come hyder ageyne/ but he myght not/ For the mare held hym faſt with her teethe/ ¶ And as the

ſheepherde

ſheepherde came for to kylle hym / the moder cryed and ſayd wepynge / Allas my ſone thow dydeſt not lerne wel / And haſt ben to lytel a whyle atte ſchole / wherfore thow muſt now deye myſerably / And the ſheepherdes took and ſlewe hym / For none ought to ſay hym ſelf mayſter withoute that he haue fyrſt ſtudyed / For ſome wene to be a grete clerke / that can nothyng of clergye /

¶ The xb fable is of the dogge / of the wulf and of the whether

GRete folye is to a fool that hath no myght / that wylle begyle another ſtronger thā hym ſelf / as reherceth this fable of a fader of famylle whiche had a grete herd or flock of ſheep / and had a grete dogge for to kepe them which was wel ſtronge / And of his voys all the wolues were aferd wherfore the ſheepherd ſlepte more ſurely / but it happed / that this dogge for his grete age deyde / wherfore the ſheepherdes were ſore troubled and wrothe / and ſayd one to other / we ſhall no more ſlepe at oure eaſe by cauſe that our dogge is dede / for the wulues ſhall now come and ete our ſheep / ¶ And thenne a grete wether fyers and prowd / whiche herd alle theſe wordes came to them and ſayd / I ſhalle gyue yow good counceylle / Shaue me / and put on me the ſkynne of the dogge And whanne the wulues ſhalle ſee me / they ſhalle haue grete fere of me / ¶ And whanne the wulues came and ſawe the wether clothed with the ſkynne of the dogge / they

they beganne all to flee / and ranne awey / ¶ It happed on a day that a wulf whiche was ſore hongry / came and toke a lambe / and after ran awaye therwith / ¶ And thenne the ſayd wether ranne after hym / And the wulf whiche ſuppoſed that it had ben the dogge ſhote thryes by the waye for the grete fere that he had / And ranne euer as faſt as he coude / and the wether alſo ranne after hym withoute ceſſe / tyl that he ranne thurgh a buſſhe full of ſharp thornes / the whiche thornes rente and brake alle the dogges ſkynne / whiche was on hym / And as the wulf loked and ſawe behynde hym / beynge moche doubtous of his dethe / ſawe and perceyued alle the decepcion and falſhede of the wether / And forthwith retorned ageynſte hym / and demaunded of hym / what beeſt arte thow / And the wether anſuerd to hym in this maner / My lord I am a wether whiche playeth with the / And the wulf ſayd / Ha mayſter ought ye to playe with your mayſter and with your lord / thow haſt made me ſo ſore aferd / that by the waye as I ranne before the / I dyte ſhyte thre grete toordes / And thene the wulf ledde hym unto the place where as he had ſhyte / ſayenge thus to hym / loke hyther / calleſt thow this a playe / I take hit not for playe / For now I ſhalle ſhewe to the / how thow oughteſt not to playe ſo with thy lord / And thenne the

the wulf took and kylled hym / and deuoured and ete hym / ¶ And therfore he that is wyſe muſte take good hede / how he playeth with hym whiche is wyſer / more ſage / and more ſtronge / than hym ſelf is /

¶ The xbj fable maketh mencyon of the man / of the lyon & of his ſone

HE that reffuſeth the good doctryne of his fader / yf euyl happe cometh to hym / it is but ryght / As to vs reherceth this fable of a labourer / whiche ſomtyme lyued in a deſerte of his cultyuynge and laboure / In this deſerte was a lyon / whiche waſted and deſtroyed all the ſede / which euery daye the ſayd labourer ſewed / and alſo this lyon deſtroyed his trees / And by cauſe that he bare and dyd to hym ſo grete harme and dommage / he made an hedge / to the whiche he putte and ſette cordes and nettes for to take lyon / And ones as this lyon came for to ete corne he entryed within a nette / & was taken / And thenne the good man came thyder / and bete and ſmote hym ſo wonderly / that vnnethe he myght ſcape fro deth / And by cauſe that the lyon ſawe that he myght not eſcape the ſubtylyte of the man / he took his lytyl lyon / and went to dwelle in another Regyon / and within a lytyl whyle after that the lyon was wel growen and was fyers & ſtronge

ſtronge he demaunded of his fader / My fader be we of this Regyon / Nay ſayd the fader / For we ben fledde awey fro oure land / And thenne the lytyl lyon aſked / wherfore / And the fader anſuerd to hym / For the ſubtylyte of the man / And the lytyl lyon demaunded of hym what man is that / And his fader ſayd to hym / he is not ſoo grete ne ſo ſtronge as we be / but he is more ſubtyle and more Ingenyous / than we be / and thene ſayd the ſone to the fader / I ſhalle goo auenge me on hym And the grete lyon ſayd to hym / goo not / For yf thow goſt thyder thow ſhalt repente the therfore / and ſhalt doo lyke a fole And the ſone anſuerd to his fader / Ha by my heed I ſhalle goo thyder / and ſhalle ſee what he can doo / And as he wente for to fynde the man / he mette an oxe within a medowe / and an hors whoſe back was al fleyen / and ſore / to whome he ſaid in this manere / who is he that hath ledde yow hyder / and that ſo hath ſo hurted yow / And they ſayd to hym / It is the man / ¶ And thenne he ſayd ageyne to them / Certaynly / here is a wonder thynge / I praye yow / that ye wylle ſhewe hym to me And they wente and ſhewed to hym the labourer / which ered the erthe / And the lyon forthwith and without ſayinge of ony moo wordes wente toward

the

the man / to whome he ſayd in this maner / Ha man thow haſt done ouer many euyls / bothe to me and to my Fader / and in lyke wyſe to oure beeſtes / Wherfore I telle the that to me thow ſhalt doo Juſtyce / And the man anſuerd to hym / I promytte and warne the / that yf thow come nyghe me I ſhalle flee with this greete clubbe / And after with this knyf I ſhall flee the / And the lyon ſayd to hym / Come thenne before my fader / and he as kynge ſhalle doo to vs good Juſtyce / And thenne the man ſayd to the lyon / I am content / yf that thow wylt ſwere to me / that thow ſhalt not touche me / tyll that we ben in the preſence of thy fader / And in lyke wyſe I ſhalle ſwere to the / that I ſhal go with the vnto the preſence of thy fader / And thus the lyon and the man ſwered eche one to other / and wente toward the grete lyon / and the man beganne to goo by the way where as his cordes and nettes were dreſſed / And as they wente / the lyon lete hym ſelf falle within a corde / and by the feet he was take / ſo that he myghte not farther goo / And by cauſe he coude not goo he ſayd to the man / O man I prey the that thow wilt helpe me / For I may no more goo / And the man anſwerd to hym / I am ſworne to the that I ſhalle not touche the vnto the tyme that we ben before thy fader /

fader / And as the lyon ſuppoſed to haue vnbound hym ſelf for to ſcape / he fylle in to another nette And thenne the lyon beganne to crye after the man / ſayenge to hym in this manere / O good man I praye the that thow wilt vnbynde me / And the man beganne to ſmyte hym vpon the hede / ¶ And thenne whanne the lyon ſawe that he myght not ſcape / he ſayd to the man / I praye the / that thow ſmyte me no more vpon the heed / but vpon myn erys / by cauſe that I wold not here the good counceylle of my fader / And thenne the man beganne to ſmyte hym at the herte and ſlewe hym / the whiche thyng happeth ofte to many children whiche ben hanged or by other maner executed and put to dethe / by cauſe that they wil not byleue the doctryne of theyr faders and moders / ne obeye to them by no wyſe

¶ The xvi fable is of the knyght and of the ſeruaunt / the whiche fond the Foxe /

Many ben that for theyr grete leſynges ſuppoſen to put vnder alle the world / but euer at laſt theyr leſynges ben knowen and manyfeſted / as hit appiereth by this fable of a knyght whiche ſomtyme wente with an archer of his thurgh the lande / And as they rode / they fonde a Fox And the knyght ſayd to the archer in good ſoothe I ſee a grete Foxe / And the archer beganne to ſaye to his lord / My lord / merueylle ye therof / I haue ben in a Regyon where as the Foxes ben as grete as an oxe / And the knyght anſuerd In good ſoothe theyr ſkynnes were good for to make mantels with / yf ſkynners myght haue them / And as they were rydynge / they felle in many wordes and deuyſes / And thenne by cauſe the knyght perceyued wel the leſynge of his Archer / he beganne to make preyers and oryſons to the goddes / for to make his Archer aferd / And ſayd in this manere / O Jupiter god almyghty / ¶ I preye the / that this daye thow wylt kepe vs fro all leſynges / ſo that we may

ſauf

ſauf paſſe thys flood and this grete Ryuer whiche is here before vs / and that we may ſurely come to oure hows / And whanne the Archer herd the prayer and oryſon of his lord / he was moche abaſſhed ¶ And thenne the Archer demaunded of hym / my lord wherfore prayeſt thow now ſoo deuoutely / And the knygt anſuerd woſt thou not wel that hit is wel knowen and manyfeſted / that we ſoone muſt paſſe a ryght grete Ryuer / And that he who on al this daye ſhalle haue made ony leſynge / yf he entre in hit / he ſhalle neuer come oute of hit ageyne / Of the whiche wordes the Archer was moche doubtous and dredeful / And as they had ryden a lytyl waye / they fond a lytyl Ryuer / wherfore the Archer demaunded of his lord / Is this the flood whiche we muſt paſſe / Nay ſayd the knyght / For hit is wel gretter / O my lord I ſaye by cauſe that the foxe whiche ye ſawe may wel haue ſwymmed and paſſed ouer this lytyl water / And the lord ſayd / I care not therfore / ¶ And after that they had ryden a lytyl ferther / the fond another lytyll Ryuer / And the Archer demaunded of hym / Is this the flood that ye ſpake of to me / Nay ſayd he / For hit is gretter & more brode / And the Archer ſayd ageyne to hym / My lord I ſay ſo / by cauſe that the foxe of the whiche I ſpake of to daye was not gretter than a calf / ¶ And thene the knyght herkyng

the

the dyſſymylacion of his archer / anſwerd not / And ſoo they rode forthe ſo longe that they fond yet another Ryuer And thenne the Archer demaunded of his lord / Is this the ſame hit / Nay ſayd the knyght / but ſoone we ſhalle come therto / O my lord I ſaye ſo by cauſe that the Foxe wherof I ſpak to yow this daye / was not gretter than a ſheep / ¶ And when they had ryden vnto euen tyme they fond a grete Ryuer and of a grete brede / ¶ And whan tharcher ſawe hit / he began al to ſhake for fere / and demaunded of his lord / My lord is this the Ryuer / Ye ſayd the knyght / O my lord I enſure you on my feythe / that the Foxe of the whiche I ſpake to daye / was not gretter than the Foxe / whiche we ſawe to day / wherfore I knowlege and confeſſe to yow my ſynne / ¶ And thenne the knyght beganne to ſmyle / and ſayd to his Archer in this manere / Alſo this Ryuer is no wors than the other whiche we ſawe to fore and haue paſſed thurgh them / And thenne the archer had grete vergoyne and was ſhameful / by cauſe that he myght no more couere his leſynge / And therfore hit is fayre and good for to ſaye euer the trouthe / and to be trewe bothe in ſpeche and in dede / For a lyer is euer begyled / and his leſynge is knowen and manyfeſted on hym to his grete ſhame & dommage

¶ Here

¶ Here after folowen some Fables of Esope after the newe translacion / the whiche Fables ben not founden ne wreton in the bookes of the philosopher Romulus

¶ The forſt fable is of the Egle and of the rauen

NOne ought to take on hym ſelf to doo a thynge / whiche is perylous withoute he fele hym ſelf ſtrong ynouȝ to doo hit / As reherceth this Fable / Of an Egle / whiche fleynge took a lambe / wherof the Rauen hadde grete enuye wherfor vpon another tyme as / the ſayd rauen ſawe a grete herd of ſheep / by his grete enuy & pryde & by his grete oultrage deſcended on them / And by ſuche fachon and manere ſmote a wether that his clowes abode to the flyes of hit / In ſoo moche that he coude not flee awey / The ſheep herd thenne came and brake and toke his wynges from hym / And after bare hym to his children to playe them with / And demaunded of hym / what byrd he was / And the Rauen anſuerd to hym / I ſuppoſed to haue ben an Egle / And by my ouerwenynge I wende to haue take a lambe / as the egle dyd / but now I knowe wel that I am a Rauen / wherfore the feble ought not in no wyſe to compare hym

hym ſelf to the ſtronge / For ſomtyme when he ſuppoſeth to doo more than he may / he falleth in to grete deſhonour / as hit appiereth by this preſent Fable / Of a Rauen / whiche ſuppoſen to haue ben as ſtronge as the egle

¶ The ſecond Fable is of the egle and of the weſel

NOne for what ſo euer myght that he haue / ought not to deſpreyſe the other / As hit appiereth by this preſent fable of an Egle / whiche chaced ſomtyme after an hare And by cauſe that the hare myght not reſyſte ne withſtande ageynſt the egle / he demaunded ayde and helpe of the weſel / the whiche tooke hym in her kepynge / And by cauſe that the egle ſawe the weſel ſoo lytyl / he deſpreyſed her / and before her toke the hare / wherof the weſel was wrothe / And therfore the weſell wente / and beheld the Egles neſt whiche was vpon a hyghe tree / And whanne ſhe ſawe hit / the lyteil weſell clymmed vpon a tree / and toke and caſt doune to the ground the yonge egles wherfore they deyde / And for this cauſe was the Egle moche wrothe and angry / and after wente to the god Jupiter And prayd hym that he wold fynde hym a ſure place where as he myght leye his egges and his lytyl chykynes / And Jupiter graunted hit and gaf hym ſuche a gyfte / that whan

whan the tyme of childynge ſhold come / that ſhe ſhold make her yong Egles within his boſome / And thenne whanne the weſel knewe this / ſhe gadred and aſſembled to gyder grete quantite of ordure of fylthe / and therof made an hyghe hylle for to lete her ſelf falle fro the top of hit in to the boſome of Jupiter / And whanne Jupiter felte the ſtenche of the fylthe / he beganne to ſhake his boſome / and both the weſel and the egges of the egle felle doune to the erthe / And thus were alle the egges broken and loſt / And whanne the Egel knewe hit / ſhe made auowe / that ſhe ſhold neuer make none egles / tyll of the weſel ſhe were aſſuerd / And therfore none how ſtronge and myghty that he be / ought not deſpreyſe ſomme other / For there is none ſoo lytyl / but that ſomtyme he may lette and auenge hym ſelf / wherfore doo thow ne deſplayſyr to none / that deſplayſyre come not to the

¶ The thyrdde fable is of the Foxe and of the gote

HE whiche is wyſe and ſage ought fyrſt to loke and behold the ende / or he begynneth the werke or dede / as hyer appiereth by this fable / Of a foxe & of a gote / that ſomtyme deſcended and wente doune in to a depe welle / for to drynke. And Whanne they had wel dronke / by cauſe that thei coude not come vpward ageyne / the Foxe ſayd to the gote in this maner / my frend yf thow wylt helpe me / we ſhall ſone ben bothe oute of this welle / For yf thow wylt ſette thy two feet ageynſte the walle / I ſhal wel lepe vpon the / & vpon thy hornes And thenne I ſhal lepe oute of this welle / ¶ And whanne I ſhalle be oute of hit / thow ſhalt take me by the handes / and I ſhal plucke and drawe the oute of the welle / And at this requeſt the gote / acorded and anſuerd / I wylle wel / And thene the gote lyfte vp his feet ageynſt the walle / and the foxe dyd ſo moche by his malyce that he got out of the welle / And whan he was oute / he began to

loke

loke on the gote / whiche was within the welle / & thenne the gote ſayd to hym / help me now as thow haſt promyſed / And thene the foxe beganne to lawhe and to ſcorne hym / and ſayd to hym / O mayſter goote / yf thow haddeſt be wel wyſe with thy ſayre berde / or euer thow haddeſt entryd in to the welle / thow ſholdeſt fyrſt haue taken hede / how thow ſholdeſt haue comen oute of hit ageyne /

¶ And therfore he whiche is wyſe / yf he wyſely wylle gouerne hym ſelf / ought to take euer good hede to the ende of his werke

¶ The fourthe fable is of the catte and of the chyken.

HE whiche is fals of kynde / & hath begonne to deceyue ſome other / euer he wyl uſe his craft / As it appiereth by this preſent Fable of a kat whiche ſomtyme toke a chyken / the whiche he beganne ſtrongly to blame / for to haue fonde ſomme cauſe that he myght ete hit / and ſayd to hym in this manere / Come hyther thou chyken / thow doſt none other good but crye alle the nyght / thow leteſt not the men ſlepe / And thenne the chyken anſuerd to hym / I doo hit for theyre grete prouffite / And ouer ageyne the catte ſayd to hym / yet is there wel wors / For thow arte an inceſte & lechour For thow knoweſt naturelly both thy moder and thy doughter And thenne the chyken ſayd to the cat / I doo hit by cauſe that my mayſter maye haue egges for his etynge / And that hys mayſter for his prouffyte gaf to hym bothe the moder and the doughter for to multyplye the egges / And thenne the catte ſayd to hym / by my feythe godſep

godſep thow haſt excuſacions ynough / but neuertheleſs thow ſhalt paſſe thurgh my throte / for I ſuppoſe not to faſte this day for alle thy wordes / ¶ And thus is it of hym whiche is cuſtommed to lyue by rauyn / For he can not kepe ne abſteyne hym ſelf fro hit / For alle thexcaſacions that be leyd on hym.

¶ The .v. fable is of the Foxe and of the buſſhe.

MEn ouȝt not to demaude ne aſke help of them that ben more cuſtomed to lette than to do good or prouffit / as it appereth by this fable of a fox which for to ſcape the peril to be taken wente vpon a thorne buſſhe / whiche hurted hym ſore / And wepynge ſayd to the buſſhe / I am come as to my refuge vnto the / and thow haſt hurted me vnto the dethe / And thenne the buſhe ſayd to hym / thow haſt erred / and wel thou haſt begyled thy ſelf / For thow ſuppoſeſt to haue taken me as thow arte cuſtommed to take chekyns and hennes / ¶ And therfore men ought not to helpe them whiche ben acuſtomed to doo euylle / but men ought rather to lette them.

¶ The bj fable is of the man and of the god of the wodes

OF the euylle man ſom tyme prouffiteth ſome other / he doth hit not by his good wylle / but by force / As reherceth to vs this fable / Of a man whiche had in his hows an ydolle the whiche oftyme he adoured as his god / to whome ofte he prayed that he wold gyue to hym moche good And the more that he prayed hym / the more he faylled / And became pouere / wherfore the man was wel wrothe ageynſt his ydolle / and took hit by the legges / and ſmote the hede of hit ſo ſtrongly ageynſt the walle / ſo that it brake in to many pyeces / Oute of the whiche ydolle yſſued a ryght grete treſoure / wherof the man was ful gladde and Joyous / And thenne the man ſayd to his ydolle / Now knowe I wel / that thow art wycked / euyl and peruers / For whanne I haue worſhipped the / thow haſt not holpen me / And now whanne I haue bete the / thow haſt moche done for me / ¶ And therfore the euylle man whanne he doth ony good / it is not of his good wylle / but by force

¶ The vij fable is of a fyſſher

Alle thynges which ben done & made in theyr tyme & ſeaſon ben wel made / as by this preſent fable it appereth Of a fyſſher whiche ſomtyme touched his bagpype nyhe the Ryuer for to make the fyſſhe to daunce / ¶ And whan he ſawe that for none ſonge that he coude pype / the fyſſhes wold not daũſe / As wroth dyd caſt his nettes in to the Ryuer / & toke of fyſſhe grete quantite / And whanne he had drawe oute his nettes oute of the water / the fyſſhe beganne to lepe and to daũſe / and thenne he ſayd to them / Certaynly hit appiereth now wel / that ye be euylle beeſtes / For now whanne ye be taken / ye lepe and daunſe / And whanne I pyped and played of my muſe or bag pype ye dayned / ne wold not daunſe / Therfore hit appiereth wel that the thynges whiche ben made in ſeaſon / ben wel made and done by reaſon

¶ The eyght fable is of the catte and of the rat

E whiche is wyſe / and that ones hath ben begyled / ought not to truſte more hym that hath begyled hym As reherceth this Fable of a catte whiche wente in to a hows / where as many rats were / the whiche he dyd ete eche one after other / ¶ And whanne the rats perceyued the grete fyerſnes and crudelyte of the catte / held a counceylle to gyder where as they determyned of one comyn wylle / that they ſhold no more hold them ne come nor goo on the lowe floore . wherfore one of them mooſt auncyent profered and ſayd to al the other ſuche wordes / ¶ My bretheren and my frendes / ye knowe wel / that we haue a grete enemye / whiche is a grete perſecutour ouer vs alle / to whome we may not reſyſte / wherfor of nede we muſt hold our ſelf vppn the hyghe balkes / to thende that he may not take vs / Of the whiche propoſycion or wordes the other rats were wel content and apayd / and byleuyd this counceylle / And whanne the kat knewe the counceylle of the rats / he hynge hym ſelf by his two feet behynd at a pynne

of

of yron whiche was ſlyked at a balke / feynynge hym ſelf to be dede / And whanne one of the rats lokynge dounward ſawe the katte beganne to lawhe and ſayd to the cat / O my Frend yf I ſuppoſed that thow were dede / I ſhold goo doune / but wel I knowe the ſo fals & peruers / that thow mayſt wel haue hanged thy ſelf / fayn-ynge to be dede / wherfore I ſhall not goo doune / And therfore he that hath ben ones begyled by ſomme other / ought to kepe hym wel fro the ſame

¶ The ix fable is of the labourer and of the pyelarge

HE whiche is taken with the wicked and euyll ouȝte to ſuffre payne and punycyon as they / As it appiereth by this fable / Of a labourer whiche ſomtyme dreſſyd and ſette his gynnes and nettes for to take the ghees and the cranes / Whiche ete his corne / It happed thenne that ones amonge a grete meyny of ghees and cranes / he took a pyelarge / whiche prayd the labourer in this maner / I praye the lete me go / For I am neyther goos ne cranne nor I am not come hyther for to do the ony eyylle / The labourer beganne thenne to lawhe / and ſayd to the pyelarge / yf thow haddeſt not be in theyr felauſhip / thow haddeſt not entryd in to my nettes / ne haddeſt not be taken / And by cauſe that thow arte founde and taken with them / thow ſhalt be punyſſhed as they ſhalle be Therfore none ought to hold companye with the euylle with oute he wylle ſuffre the punycion of them whiche ben punyſſhed

¶ The tenth fable is of the child / whiche kepte the sheep

HE whiche is acustomed to make lesynges / how be it that he saye trouthe / Yet men byleue hym not / As reherceth this fable / Of a child whiche somtyme kepte sheep / the whiche cryed ofte withoute cause / sayenge / Allas for goddes loue socoure yow me / For the wulf wylle ete my sheep / And whanne the labourers that cultyued and ered the erthe aboute hym / herd his crye / they come to helpe hym / the whiche came so many tymes / and fond nothyng / And as they sawe that there were no wulues / they retorned to theyr labourrage / And the child dyd so many tymes for to playe hym / ¶ It happed on a day that the wulf came / and the child cryed as he was acustomed to doo / And by cause that the labourers supposed / that hit had not ben trouthe / abode styll at theyr laboure / wherfore the wulf dyd ete the sheep / For men bileue not lyghtly hym / whiche is knowen for a lyer

¶ The xj fable is of the ante and of the columbe

One ought to be ſlowful of the good whiche he receyueth of other/ As reherceth this fable of an Ante/ whiche came to a fontayne for to drynke/ and as ſhe wold haue dronke ſhe felle within the fontayn/ vpon the whiche was a columbe or douue/ whiche ſeyng that the Ante ſhold haue ben drowned withoute helpe/ took a braunche of a tree/ & caſt it to her for to ſaue her ſelf/ ¶ And the Ante wente anone upon the braunche and ſaued her/ ¶ And anone after came a Fawkoner/ whiche wold haue take the douue/ And thenne the Ante whiche ſawe that the Fawkoner dreſſyd his nettes came to his foote/ and ſoo ſaſt pryked hit/ that ſhe cauſed hym to ſmyte the erthe with his foote/ and therwithe made ſoo gret noyſe/ that the douue herd hit/ wherfore ſhe flewhe aweye or the gynne and nettes were al ſette/ ¶ And therfore none ought to forgete the benyfyce whiche he hath receyued of ſome other/ for ſlowfulneſſe is a grete ſynne

¶ The xij fable is of the Bee and of Jupiter

NOw the euyl which men wyſhe to other / cometh to hym whiche wyſheth hit / as hit appiereth by this fable / of a Bee whiche offred and gaf to Jupyter a pyce of hony / wherof Jupyter was moche Joyous / And thenne Jupyter ſayd to the bee / demaunde of me what thow wylt / and I ſhalle graunte and gyue hit to the gladly / And thenne the Bee prayed hym in this manere / God almyghty I pray the that thow wylt gyue to me and graũte / that who ſo euer ſhal come for to take awey my hony / yf I pryke hym / he may ſodenly deye / And by cauſe that Jupyter loued the humayn lygnage he ſayd to the Bee / Suffyſe the / that who ſo euer ſhalle goo to take thy hony / yf thow pryke or ſtynge hym / Incontynent thow ſhalt deye / And thus her prayer was tourned to her grete dommage / For men ought not to demaude of god / but ſuche thynges that ben good and honeſt

¶ The xiij fable is of a carpenter

IN as moche as god is more propyce and benygne to the good and holy / moche more he punyſſheth the wycked and euylle / As we may ſee by this fable / Of a carpenter whiche cutte wode vpon a Ryuer for to make a temple to the goddes / And as he cutte wode / his axe felle in the Ryuer / wherfore he beganne to wepe and to calle helpe of the goddes / And the god Mercurye for pyte appiered before hym And demaunded of hym wherfore he wepte / and ſhewed to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded of hym yf hit was the axe whiche he had loſt / & he ſayd nay / And after the god ſhewed to hym another axe of ſyluer / And ſemblably ſaid nay And by cauſe that Mercurius ſawe that he was good and trewe / he drewe his axe oute of the water / and took hit to hym with moche good that he gaf to hym / And the carpenter told thyſtory to his felawes / of the whiche one of them came in to the ſame place for to cutte woode as his felawe dyd before / & lete falle his axe within the water / and beganne / to wepe and to demaund

maund the helpe and ayde of the goddes / And thenne Mercury appiered to fore hym / and ſhewed to hym an axe of gold / and demaunded of hym in ſuche manere / Is the ſame hit that thow haſt loſt / And hé anſuerd to Mercury / ye fayre ſyre and myghty god the ſame is it / And Mercury ſeynge the malyce of the vylayne gaf to hym neyther the ſame ne none other / and lefte hym wepynge / For god whiche is good and Juſt rewarded the good and trewe in this world / or eche other after his deſerte and punyſheth the eyylle and Iniuſte

¶ The xiiij fable is of a yonge theef and of his moder

He whiche is not chaſtyſed at the begynnynge is euyll and peruers at the ende/ As hit appiereth by this fable of a yonge child whiche of his yongthe beganne to ſtele/ and to be a theef/ And the theftys whiche he maad/ he broughte to his moder/ and the moder toke them gladly/ & in no wyſe ſhe chaſtyſed hym/ And after that he had done many theftys/ he was taken/ and condempned to be hanged/ And as men ledde hym to the Juſtyce/ his moder folowed hym and wepte ſore/ And thenne the child prayed to the Juſtyce/ that he myght ſaye one word to his moder/ And as he approuched to her/ made ſemblaunt to telle her ſomme wordes at her ere/ & with his teeth he bote of her noſe/ wherof the Juſtyce blamed hym/ And he anſuerd in this manere/ My lordes ye haue no cauſe to blame me therfore/ For my moder

is

is cauſe of my deth For yf ſhe had wel chaſtyſed me / I had not come to this ſhame and vergoyne / For who loueth wel / wel he chaſtyſeth / And therfore chaſtyſe wel youre children / to thende / that ye falle not in to ſuche a caas

¶ The xb fable is of the flee and of the man.

HE that dothe euyl / how be hit that the euylle be not grete men ought not to leue hym vnpunyſſhed / As it appereth by this fable / Of a man whiche took a flee whiche bote hym / to whome the man ſayd in this manere / Fle why byteſt thow me / and leteſt me not ſlepe / and the flee anſuerd It is my kynd to doo ſoo / wherfore I praye the that thow wylt not put me to dethe / And the man beganne to lawhe / & ſayd to the flee / how be it / that thow mayſt not hurte me ſore / Neuertheless / to the behoueth not to pryeke me / wherfore thow ſhalt deye / For men ought not to leue none euyll vnpunyſſhed how be hit that hit be not grete.

¶ The xvi fable is of the huſbond and of his two wyues.

NOo thynge is werſe to the man than the woman / As it appereth by this fable / of a man of a meane age / whiche tooke two wyues / that is to wete an old / & one yong / whiche were both dwellyng in his hows / & by cauſe that the old deſyred to haue his loue / ſhe plucked the blak herys fro his hede and his berde / by cauſe he ſhold the more be lyke her / And the yonge woman at the other ſyde plucked

plucked and drewe oute alle the whyte herys / to the ende / that he ſhold ſeme the yonger / more gay and fayrer in her ſyghte / And thus the good man abode withoute ony here on his hede And therfore hit is grete folye to the auncyent to wedde them ſelf ageyne / For to them is better to be vnwedded / than to be euer in trouble with an euyl wyf / for the tyme in whiche they ſhold reſte them / they put it to payne and to grete labour.

¶ The xbij fable is of the labourer and of his children.

He that laboureth and werketh contynuelly maye not faylle to haue plente of goodes / as it appiereth by this preſent fable / Of a good man labourer / whiche all his lyf had laboured and wrought / and was ryche / and whan he ſhold deyé / he ſayd to his children / My children I muſte now deye / and my treſour I haue lefte in my vyne / And after that the good man was dede / his children whiche ſuppoſed that his treſour had ben in the vyne / dyd nothyng al day but delued hit / & it bare more fruyte than dyd before / ¶ For who trauaylleth wel / he hath euer brede ynough for to ete / And he that werketh not dyeth for honger.

¶ Here fynyſſhen the Fables of Eſope
¶ And after foloweth the
fables of Aupan

¶ The fyrſt fable is of the old woman and of the wulf

MEn ought not by byleue on al maner ſpyrytes / As reherceth this fable of an old woman / which ſaid to her child bicauſe that it wept / certeynly if thow wepſt ony more / I ſhal make the to be ete of the wulf / & the wulf heryng this old woman / abode ſtyll to fore the yate / & ſuppoſed to haue eten the old womans child / & by cauſe that the wulf had ſoo longe taryed there that he was hongry / he retorned and went ageyne in to the wood / And the ſhewulf demaunded of hym / why haſt thow not brought to me ſome mete / And the wulf anſuerd / by cauſe / that the old woman hath begyled me / the whiche had promyſed to me to gyue to me her child for to haue ete hym / And at the laſte I hadde hit not / And therfore men ought in no wyſe to truſt the woman / And he is wel a fole that ſetteth his hope and truſte in a woman / And therfore truſte them not / and thow ſhalt doo as the ſage and wyſe

¶ The ſecond fable is of the tortoſe and of the other byrdes

HE that enhaunceth hym ſelf more than he oughte to do To hym oughte not to come noo good / As hit appiereth by this preſent fable / Of a tortoſe / whiche ſaid to the byrdes / yf ye lyft me vp wel hyghe fro the ground to the ayer I ſhalle ſhewe to yow grete plente of precius ſtones / And the Egle toke her and bare her ſo hyghe / that ſhe myghte not ſee the erthe / And the Egle ſayd to her ſhewe me now theſe precius ſtones that thow promyſet to ſhewe to me / And by cauſe that the tortoſe myght not ſee in the erthe / and that the Egle knewe wel that he was deceyued / threſted his clowes in to the tortoſes bely / and kylled hit / For he that wylle haue and gete worſhip and glorye may not haue hit withoute grete laboure / Therfore hit is better and more ſure / to kepe hym lowely than to enhaunce hym ſelf on hyghe / and after to deye ſhamefully and myſerably / ¶ For men ſayn comynly / who ſo mounteth hyher / than he ſhold / he falleth lower than he wold

¶ The thyrd fable is of the two Creuyſſes

HE whiche will teche and lerne ſome other / ought firſt to corryge & examyne hym ſelf / as it appereth by this fable of a creuyſſe / whiche wold haue chaſtyſed her owne doughter bicauſe that ſhe wente not wel ryght / And ſayd to her in this manere / My doughter / hit pleaſeth me not that thow gooſt thus backward / For euylle myght wel therof come to the / And thenne the doughter ſayd to her moder My moder I ſhalle go ryght and forward with a good will but ye muſt goo before for to ſhewe to me the waye / But the moder coude not other wyſe goo / than after her kynd / wherfore her doughter ſayd unto her / My moder fyrſt lerne your ſelf for to goo ryght and forward / and thenne ye ſhalle teche me And therfore he that wylle teche other / ought to ſhewe good enſample / For grete ſhame is to the doctour whanne his owne coulpe or faulte accuſeth hym

¶ The fourthe fable is of the asse / and of the skynne of the Lyon

NOne ought not to gloryfye hym self of the goodes of other . as recyteth this fable of an asse whiche somtyme fond the skynne of a lyon / the whiche he dyd & wered on hym / but he coude neuer hyde his eres therwith / & when he was / as he supposed wel arayed with the sayd skynne / he ranne in to the forest / And whanne the wyld beestes sawe hym come / they were so ferdfull that they alle beganne

beganne to flee / For they wend / that it had be the lyon / And the mayſter of the aſſe ſerched and ſoughte his aſſe in euery place al aboute And as he had ſoughte longe / he thoughte that he wold go in to the foreſt for to ſee yf his aſſe were there / And as ſoone as he was entryd in to the foreſt / he mette with his aſſe arayed as before is ſayd / but his mayſter whiche had ſoughte hym longe ſawe his erys / wherfore he knewe hym wel / and anone toke hym / and ſayd in this manere / Ha a mayſter aſſe / arte thow clothed with the ſkynne of the lyon / thow makeſt the beſtes to be aferd / but yf they knewe the / as wel as I do / they ſhold haue no fere of the / but I enſure the / that wel I ſhalle bete the therfore / And thenne he toke fro hym the ſkynne of the lyon / and ſayd to hym Lyon ſhalt thow be no more / but an aſſe ſhalt thow euer be / And his mayſter tooke thenne a ſtaf / and ſmote hym / ſoo that euer after he remembryd hym wel of hit / And therfore he whiche auaunceth hym ſelf of other mennes goodes is a very foole / For as men ſayn comynly he is not wel arayed nor wel appoynted / whiche is clothed with others gowne / ne alſo it is not honeſte to make large thonges of other mennes leder

¶ The .v. fable is of the frogge and of the Foxe

NOne ought to auaunce hym ſelf to doo that whiche he he can not doo / As hit appiereth of a frogge / whiche ſomtyme yſſued or came oute of a dyche / the whiche preſumed to haue lepte vpon a hyghe montayne / And whanne ſhe was vpon the mountayne / ſhe ſayd to other beeſtes / I am a mayſtreſſe in medecyn / and canne gyue remedy to al manere of ſekenes by myn arte / and ſubtylyte / and ſhalle rendre and brynge yow vp ageyne in good helthe / wherof ſome byleued her / And thenne the Foxe whiche perceyued the folyſſhe byleue of the beeſtes / beganne to lawhe / and ſayd to them / poure beeſtes / how may this fowle and venemous beeſt whiche is ſeke and pale of colour render and gyue to yow helthe / For the leche whiche wylle hele ſomme other / ought fyrſte to hele hym ſelf / For many one counterfayteth the leche / whiche can not a word of the ſcyence of medecyne / from the whiche god preſerue and kepe vs

¶ The vj fable is of the two dogges

HE that taketh within hym ſelf vayne glorye of that thynge / by the whiche he ſhold humble hym ſelf is a very fole / as hit appereth by this fable / of a fader of famylle / whiche had two dogges / of the whiche the one withoute ony barkyng bote the folke / & the other dyd barke and bote not / And whan the fader of famyll perceyued the ſhrewdneſs and malyce of the dogge that barkyd not he henge on his nek a belle / to the ende that men ſhold beware of hym / wherfore the dogge was ouer prowd and fyers / and beganne to dyſpreyſe alle the other dogges / of the whiche one of the mooſt auncyent ſayd to hym in this manere / O fole beeſt / now perceyue I wel thy foly and grete wodeneſſe to ſuppoſe / that this belle is gyuen to the for thyn owne deſerte and meryte / but certaynly hit is not ſoo / For hit is taken to the for thy demerytes / and by cauſe of thy ſhrewdneſſe / and grete treaſon / for to ſhewe / that thow arte fals and traytour / And therfore none oughte to be Joyeful and gladde of that thynge / wherof he

he oughte to be tryſt and ſorowful / as many ſoles done / whiche make Joye of theyr vyces and euyll dedes / for a moche fole were the theef whiche that men ledde for to be hanged / and that he had a cord of gold aboute his neck / yf he ſhold make Joye therof / how be hit that the corde were moche ryche and fayre

¶ The vij fable is of the camel and of Jupiter

Uery creature ought to be content of that / that god hath gyuen hym withoute to take their herytaunce of other / As reherceth this fable Of a camel whiche ſom tyme complayned hym to Jupiter of that the other beeſtes mocqued hym / by cauſe that he was not of ſo grete beaute / as they were of / wherfore to Jupiter Inſtantly he prayd in ſuche maner as foloweth / Fayr ſyre and god / I requyre and praye that thow wylt gyue to me hornes / to thende that I maye be nomore mocqued / Jupiter then beganne to lawhe / and in ſtede of hornes / he took fro hym his erys / and ſayd / thow haſt more good than hit behoueth thee to haue / And by cauſe that thow demaundeſt that / whiche thow oughteſt not to haue I haue take fro the that whiche of ryght and kynd thow ouȝteſt to haue / For none ought not to deſyre more than he ought to haue / to the ende that he leſe not that whiche he hath /

¶ The eyght fable is of the two felawes

Men ought not to hold felauſhip with hym / whiche is acuſtommed to begyle other / As hit appiereth by thys Fable / Of two felawes whiche ſomtyme held felauſhip to eche other for to goo bothe by montaynes and valeyes And for to make better theyr vyage / they were ſworne eche one to the other / that none of them bothe ſhould leue other vnto that the tyme of dethe ſhold come and departe them / And as they walked in a foreſt they mette with a grete wyld bere / & bothe felaws ran ſone awey for fere / of the whiche the one clymmed / vpon a tree / And whan the other ſawe that his felawe had lefte hym leyd hym felf on the erthe / and fayned to be dede / And Incontynent the bere came for to ete hym / but by cauſe the gallaunt playd wel his game / the bere went forthe his waye and touched hym not / And thēne his felawe came doun fro the tree whiche ſayd to hym / I pray thee to telle me what the bere ſayd to the / For as me ſemeth he ſpake to the / and hath ſhewed

ſhewed to the grete ſygne or token of loue / And thenne his felawe ſayd to hym / He taught me many fayre ſecretes / but emonge alle other thynges he ſayd to me / that I ſhold neuer truſt hym who ones hath deceyued me

¶ The ix fable maketh mencion of the two pottes

THe poure ought not to take the Ryche as his felawe as it appiereth by this fable of two pottes / of the whiche the one was coper / and the other of erthe / the whiche pottes dyd mete to gyder within a Ryuer / ¶ & by cauſe that the erthen pot wente ſwyfter than dyd the coper potte / the pot of coper ſayd to the pot of erthe / I praye the that we may goo to gyder / And the erthen potte anſuerd and ſayd to the coper pot / I wylle not go with the / For it ſhold happe to me as it happed to the glas and of the morter For yf thow ſholdeſt mete with me / thow ſholdeſt breke and putte me in to pyeces / ¶ And therfore the poure is a fole that compareth and lykeneth hym ſelf to the ryche and myghty / For better is to lyue in pouerte than to deye vylaynouſly and oppreſſyd of the ryche

¶ The x fable is of the lyon and of the boole

IT is not alweye tyme to auenge hym ſelf of his enemye / As it appiereth by this fable of a bole / whiche ſomtyme fledde before a lyon / And as the bole wold entre within a cauerne for to ſaue hym / a gote wente geynſte hym for to kepe and lette hym that he ſhold not entre in it / to whome the bole ſayd / It is not tyme now to auenge me on the / for the lyon that chaieth me / but the tyme ſhalle come that wel I ſhalle fynde the / For men ought not to doo to hym ſelf dommage for to be auengyd of his enemy / but oughte to loke for tyme and place conenable for to doo hit

¶ The xi fable is of the Ape and of his fone

No fowler a thyng is to the man / than with his mouth to preyſe hym ſelf / As this fable reherceth to vs / Of Jupiter kynge of alle the world whiche made alle the beeſtes and alle the byrdes to be aſſembled to gyder for to knowe theyr bounte / and alſo theyr kynd / Emonge alle the whiche came the Ape / whiche preſented his ſone to Jupiter / ſayenge thus / Fayre ſyre and myghty god / loke and ſee here the faireſt beeſt that euer thow createſt in this world / And Jupiter thenne beganne to lawhe / and after ſayd to hym / thow arte wel a fowle beeſt to preyſe ſoo thy ſelf / For none oughte to preyſe hym ſelf / but oughte to doo good and vertuous werkes / wherof other may preyſe hym / for it is a ſhameful thyng to preyſe hym ſelf

¶ The xij fable is of the crane and of the pecock

FOr what vertue that ony man hath / none oughte to preyſe hym ſelf / As hit apiereth by this fable / Of a pecok / whiche ſomtyme made a dyner to a crane / And And whanne they had eten and dronken ynough / they had grete wordes to gyder / wherfore the pecok ſayd to the crane / Thow haſt not ſo fayre a forme ne ſo fayre a fygure as I haue / ne alſo fayr fethers / ne ſoo reſplendyſſhynge as I haue / To whome the crane anſuerd / and ſayd / It is trouthe / Neuertheles thow haſt not one good / ne one ſo fayre a vertue as I haue / For how be hit that I haue no ſo fayre fethers as thow haſt / yet can I flee better than thy ſelf doſt / For with thy fayre fethers thow muſt euer abyde on the erthe / and I may flee where ſomeuer hit pleaſeth me / And thus euerychone ought to haue ſuffyſaunce and to be content of that / that he hath / without auanncynge or prayſynge of hym ſelf / and not to dyſpreyſe none other.

¶ The xiij fable is of the hunter and of the tygre

Erse is the ſtroke of a tonge / than the ſtroke of a ſpere as hit appiereth by this fable / Of a hunter / whiche with his arowes hurted the wyld beeſtes / in ſuche wyſe that none ſcaped fro hym / to the whiche beſtes a tygre fyers and hard ſayd in this manere / Be not aferd / For I ſhalle kepe yow well / And as the Tygre came in to the wode / the hunter was hyd within a buſſhe / the whiche whan he ſawe paſſe the tygre before the buſſhe / he ſhote at hym an arowe / and hytte hym on the thye / wherfore the tygre was gretely abaſſhed And wepynge and ſore ſyghynge ſayd to the other beeſtes / I wote not from whens this cometh to me / ¶ And whanne the foxe ſawe hym ſoo gretely abaſſhed / al lawhynge ſayd to hym / Ha a tygre / thow arte ſo myghty and ſo ſtronge / And thenne the tygre ſayd to hym / My ſtrengthe auaylled me not at that tyme / For none may kepe hym ſelf fro treaſon And therfore ſome ſecrete is here / whiche I knewe not before But notwithſtandynge this I maye wel conceyue / that there is no wors arowe / ne

ne that letteth more the man / than tharowe whiche is ſhotte fro the euyll tongue / For whanne ſom perſone profereth or ſayth ſom wordes in a felauſhip / of ſommen a of honeſte & good lyf / alle the felauſhip ſuppoſeth that that whiche this euylle tongue hath ſayd be trewe / be hit trewe or not / how be it that it be but leſynge / but notwithſtondynge the good man ſhalle euer be wounded of that ſame arowe / whiche wound ſhalle be Incurable / And yf hit were a ſtroke of a ſpere / hit myght be by the Cyrurgyen heled / but the ſtroke of an euylle tongue may not be heled / by cauſe that Incontynent as the word is profered or ſayd / he that hath ſayd hit / is no more mayſter of hit / And for this cauſe the ſtroke of a tongue is Incurable and withoute guaryſon

¶ The xiiij fable is of the four oxen

MEn oughte not to breke his feythe ageynſte his good Frend / ne to leue his felauſhip / as hit appiereth by this fable / of four oxen whiche to gyder were in a fair medowe / ¶ And by cauſe that euer they were and kepte them to gyder / none other beeſt durſte not aſſaylle them / and alſo the lyon dradde them moche / the whiche lyon on a daye came to them / And by his deceyuable wordes thoughte for to begyle them / & to rauſſhe & take them the better / maade them to be ſepared eche one fro other / ¶ And whanne they were ſepered / the lyon wente / and toke one of them / And whan the lyon wold haue ſtrangled hym / the oxe ſayd to hym / godſep / He is a foole whiche byleueth fals and deceyuable wordes And leueth the felawſhip of his good frende / For yf we had ben euer to gyder / thow haddeſt not taken me / And therfore he whiche is / and ſtandeth wel ſure / ought to kepe hym ſoo that he falle not / For to whiche is wel / meue not hym ſelf

¶ The xb fable is of the buſſhe / and of the aubyer tree

One for his beaute ought not to deſpreyſe ſome other / For ſomtyme ſuche one is fayre that ſoone wexeth lothely and fowle / and to hyghe falleth vnto lowe / as it apperyth by this fable / Of a fayr tree whiche mocqued and ſcorned a lytyl buſſhe / and ſayd / ¶ Seeſt thow not / my fayre fourme and my fayre fygure / And that of me men and byldeth fayre edefyces as palays and caſtellis / galeyes & other ſhippes for to ſaylle on the ſee / And as he auaunced & preyſed hym ſelf thus / came there a labourer with his axe for to hewe and ſmyte hym to the ground / And as the labourer ſmote vpon the fayre tree / the buſſhe ſayd / Certaynly my broder yf now thow were as lytel / as I am / men ſhold not hewe ne ſmyte the doune to the erthe / And therfore none oughte to reioyſſhe hym ſelf of his worſhip / For ſuche is now in grete honour and worſhip / that herafter ſhalle falle in to grete vytupere ſhame and diſhonour

¶ The xxj fable is of the fyſſher / and of the lytyl fyſſhe

MEn ought not to leue that thynge whiche is ſure & certayne / for hope to haue the vncertayn / as to vs reherceth this fable of a fyſſher whiche with his lyne toke a lytyll fyſſhe whiche ſayd to hym / My frend I pray the / doo to me none euylle / ne putte me not to dethe / For now I am nought / for to be eten / but whanne I ſhalle be grete / yf thow come ageyne hyther / of me ſhalt thow mowe haue grete auaylle / For thenne I ſhalle goo with the good whyle / And the Fyſſher ſayd to the fyſſhe . Syn I hold the now / thou ſhalt not ſcape fro me / For grete ſoly hit were to me for to ſeke the here another tyme / For men ought not to lete goo that / of what they be ſure of / hopynge to haue afterwards that that they haue not and whiche is vncertayne.

¶ The xbij fable is of phebus / of the Auarycious / and of the enuyous

NOne oughte to doo harme or dommage to ſomme other for to receyue or doo his owne dommage / As hit appereth by this fable / Of Jupiter whiche ſent phebus in to therthe for to haue al the knowlege of the thoux3t of men ¶ This phebus thenne mette with two men / of whiche the one was moche enuyous / And the other ryght couetous / Phebus demaunded of them what theyr thought was / We thynke ſaid they to demaunde and aſke of the grete yeftes / To the which phebus anſuerd / Now demaunde that ye wylle / For all that that ye ſhalle demaunde of me / I ſhalle graunte hit / And of that / that the fyrſt of yow ſhalle aſke / the ſecond haue the dowble parte / or as moche more ageyne / And thenne the auarycious ſayd / I wyl that my felawe aſke what he wyll fyrſt wherof the enuyous was wel content / whiche ſayd to Phebus Fayre ſyre I praye the that I maye leſe one of myn eyen / to thende that my felawe may leſe al bothe his eyen / wherfor phebus

phebus beganne to lawhe whiche departed and wente ageyne vnto Jupiter / and told hym the grete malyce of the enuyous / whiche was Joyeful and glad of the harme and dommage of an other / & how he was wel content to ſuffre payne for to haue adommaged ſomme other

¶ The xviij fable is of the theef / and of the child whiche wepte

HE is a fole that putteth his good in jeopardy to leſe it for to gete & haue ſom others good / as it appereth by this fable of a theef whiche fond a child wepynge beſyde a welle / of whom the theef dyde aſke why he wepte / & the child anſwerd to hym I wepe / by cauſe that I haue lete falle within this welle a loket of gold / & thenne the theef toke of his clothes / & ſette them on the ground and wente doune in to the welle / And as he was doune the child toke his gowne & ſette hym within the welle / And thus for couetyſe to wynne / he loſt his gowne / For ſuche ſuppoſen to wynne ſomtyme whiche leſen / And therfore none ought to wyſhe that / that he hath not / to thende that he leſeth not that / that he hath / For of the thynge wrongfully and euylle goten / the thyrd heyre ſhalle neuer be ppſſeſſour of hit.

¶ The xix fable is of the lyon and of the gote

He is wyſe that can kepe hym ſelf from the wyly and fals / as hit appereth by this fable / Of a lyon / whiche ones mette with a gote / whiche was vpon a mountayne And whanne the lyon ſawe her / he ſayd to her in this manere / For to gyue to her occacion to come doune fro the hylle / to thende that he myght ete her / My ſuſter why comeſt thow not hyder on this fayre and grene medowe for to ete of theſe fayre herbes or graſſe / And the gote anſuerd to hym / How be hit / that thow ſayſt trouthe / Neuertheles thow ſayſt it not / neyther for my wele ne for my prouffyte / but thow ſayſt hit / by cauſe that thow woldeſt fayne ete and deuoure me / but I truſte not in thy fayre ſpeche / For many tymes I haue herd ſaye of my graūt moder / he that is wel / meue not hym ſelf / For he whiche is in a place wel ſure / is wel a ſole to go fro hit / and to putte hym ſelf in grete daunger and perylle

¶ The xx fable was of the crowe whiche was a thurſt

BEtter is craſte and ſubtylyte than force/ As reherceth to vs this fable/ Of a crowe whiche vpon a day came for to drynke oute of a boket/ and by cauſe that ſhe myght not reche to the water/ ſhe dyd fyll the boket ful of ſmal ſtones/ in ſoo moche that the water came vpward/ wherof ſhe dranke thenne at her wylle/ and playſyre/ And therfore hit appiereth wel/ that wytte or ſapyence is a moche fayr vertue For by ſapyence or wytte/ thow ſhalt ouowe reſyſte to all faultes/

¶ The xxj fable is of the vylayne and of the yonge bole /

HE whiche is of euylle and ſhrewd kynd / with grete payne he may chaſty h ym ſelf / as it appereth by this fable / Of a vylayne / whiche had a yonge bole / the whiche he myght not bynd / by cauſe that euer he ſmote with his hornes / wherfore the vylayne cutte of his hornes / ¶ But yet whan he wold haue bound hym / the bole caſted his fute fro hym / in ſuche wyſe that he ſuffred noman to come nyghe hym / And whan the vylayne perceyued the malyce of the bole / he ſayd to hym / I ſhalle chaſtyſe the wel / For I ſhalle take the in to the bouchers handes / And thenne was the bole wel chaſtyſed / ¶ And thus ought men to doo of the euylle / curſyd & rebelles / whiche doo no thynge but playe with dees and cardes and to ruffule / Such folke ought men to put in to the handes of the boucher for to lede them to the galhows / For better may no man chaſtyſe them / For with grete payne may he be chaſtyſed / whiche fleeth alle good werkes ond alle good felauſhip

¶ The xxij fable is of the viator or palmer and of Satyre

MEn ought to beware & kepe hym ſelf from hym whiche bereth both fyre and water / as reherceth to vs this Fable Of a pylgrim / whiche ſomtyme walked in the wynter / and wente thurgh a grete foreſt / ¶And by cauſe that the ſnowe had couerd al the wayes / he wiſt ne knewe not whyther he wente / ageynſte the whiche came a wodewoſe named Satyre by cauſe he ſawe hym a cold / whiche aproched to the pylgrym and brought hym in to his pytte / And whan the pylgrym ſawe hym / he hadde grete drede by cauſe that a wodewoſe is a monſtre lyke to the man / as hit appiereth by his fygure / ¶And as the wodewoſe or Satyre ledde the pylgrym in to his pytte / the pylgrym dyd blowe within his handes for to chauffe them / For he was ſore cold / And thenne the wodewoſe gaf to hym hote water to drynke / ¶And whan the pylgrym wold haue dronken hit / he beganne to blowe in hit / And the wodewoſe demaunded of hym / why he

he dyd blowe in hit / And the pylgrym ſayd to hym / I blowe in hit / for to haue it ſomwhat more cold than hit is / The wodewoſe thenne ſayd to hym / Thy felauſhip is not good to me / by cauſe that thow bereſt bothe the fyre and the water in thy mouthe / therfore go hens fro my pyt and neuer retorne ageyne / For the felauſhip of the man whiche hath two tongues is nought / And the man wiche is wyſe ought to flee the felauſhip of flaterers / For by flatering & adulacion many haue ben begyled and deceyued

¶ The xxiij fable is of the oxe and of the rat

THe lordes ought to loue theyr ſubgettis / For he whiche is hated of his tenaunts and ſubgets / is not lord of his land / as hit appereth by this Fable / Of an oxe / whiche ſomtyme was within a ſtable / and as the oxe on a tyme wold haue ſlepte fayne / a rat came / whiche bote the oxe by the thyes / And as the oxe wold haue ſmyten hym / he ran awaye into his hole / And thenne the oxe beganne to menace the rat / And the ratte ſayd to hym / I am not aferd of the And yf thow arte grete / thy parentes ben cauſe therof and not thy ſelf / And therfore the ſtronge ought not to deſpeyſe the feble / but ought to loue hym as the chyef or hede ought to loue his lymmes / For he that loueth not / oughte not to be loued / And therfore the lord muſt loue his ſubgettys / yf of them he wylle be loued

¶ The xxiiij fable is of the goos and of her lord

HE that ouer ladeth hym ſelf/ is euylle ſtrayned/ As this fable ſayeth/ of a man/ whiche had a goos/ that leyd euery day an egge of gold/ The man of auaryce or couetouſnes commaunded and bad to her/ that euery daye ſhe ſhold leye two egges/ And ſhe ſayd to hym/ Certaynly/ my mayſter I maye not/ wherfore the man was wrothe with her/ and ſlewe her/ wherfore he loſt that ſame grete good/ of the whiche dede he was moche ſorowful and wrothe/ how be it that it was not tyme to ſhette the ſtable whan the horſes ben lofte/ & gone/ And he is not wyſe whiche does ſuch a thynge/ wherof he ſhalle repente hym after ward/ ne healſo/ whiche doth his owne dommage for to auenge hym ſelf on ſomme other/ For by cauſe that he ſuppoſeth to wynne al/ he leſeth all that he hath.

¶ The xxv fable is of the ape and of his two children

HE that ſomtyme men deſpreyſen / may wel helpe ſomme other / as hit appereth by this Fable of an Ape / whiche had two children / of the whiche he hated the one / & loued the other / whiche he toke in his armes / and with hym fled before the dogges / And whanne the other ſawe / that his moder lefte hym behynde / he ranne and lepte on her back / And by cauſe that the lytyl ape whiche the ſhe ape held in her armes empeched her to flee / ſhe lete hit falle to the erthe / And the other whiche the moder hated held fait and was ſaued / the whiche from thens forthon kyſſed and embraced his moder / And And ſhe thenne beganne to loue hym wherfore many tymes it happeth / that that thynge whiche is deſpreyſed / is better than that thynge whiche is loued and preyſed / For ſomtyme the children whiche ben preyſed and loued / done laſſe good than they whiche ben deſpreyſed and hated .

¶ The xxvj Fable is of the wynd and of therthen pot

He that ouer moche enhaunceth hym ſelf / ſooner than he wold / he falleth doune / as hit appereth by this fable / Of an erthen pot maker whiche made a grete pot of erthe / the whiche he dyd ſette in the ſonne / by cauſe that more ſurely hit ſhold haue ben dryed / Ageynſte the whiche came and blewe a grete wynd / And whanne the wynd ſawe the potte he demaunded of hym / who arte thow / And the pot anſuerd to hym / I am a potte the beſt made that men can fynde / & none may lette ne empeche me / And how ſayd the wynde / thow art yet al loſte / and haſt neyther vertue ne none force / and by cauſe I knowe wel thy ouer pryde / I ſhall breke the / and putte the in to pyeces / to thende / that thow of thy grete pryde mayſt haue knowlege / And therfore the feble ought to meke and humble hym ſelf and obeye to his lord / and not ſo enhauce hym more than he ought / to thende / he falleth not from hyhe to lowe

¶ The xxbij fable is of the wulf and of the lambe

Of two euyls men ought euer to eſchewe and flee the worſt of bothe / yf ony of them may be eſchewed / as hit appiereth by this fable / of a wulf / whiche ranne after a lambe / the whiche lambe fled into the hows where as gotes were / And whan the wulf ſawe that he myght in no wyſe take the lambe / he ſayd to hym by ſwete wordes / Leue thy ſelauſhip / and come with me into the feldes / for yf thow come not / thow ſhalt be take by them / and ſhalt be ſacryfyed to theyre goddes / And the lamb anſuered to the wulf / I haue leuer to ſhede al my blood for the loue of the goddes / and to be ſacryfyed / than to be eten and deuoured of the / And therfore he is ful of wyſedome and of prudence / who of two grete euyls may and can eſcape the gretteſt of bothe /

¶ Here fynyſſhen the fables of Auian / And after followen the fables of Alfonce

¶ The furſt fable maketh mencion of therhortacion of lappence or wyſedome and of loue

Rabe of Lucanye ſayd to his ſone in this maner / My ſone beware & loke that the formyce be not more prudent or wyſer / than thy ſelf / the whiche gadreth & aſſembleth to gyder in the ſomer all that to her nedeth to haue in the wynter / and beware that thow ſlepe no lenger / than the Cocke doth the whiche watcheth and waketh atte matyns tyme / and that he be not wyſer and more ſage than thy ſelf / the whiche rewleth and gouerneth wel ix hennes / but hit ſuffyſeth wel / that thow rewle and gouerne one wel / And alſo that the dogge be not more noble than thy ſelf / the whiche forgeteth neuer the good whiche is done to hym / but euer he remembryth it / ¶ Item my ſone ſuppoſe it not a lytyll thynge to haue a good Frend but doubte not to haue a thowſand frendes / ¶ And whanne A rabe wold deye / he demaunded of his ſone / My ſone how many good frendes hast thow / And his ſone anſwerd to hym / My fader I haue as I ſuppoſe an honderd frendes / And

And the fader anſuerd to hym / beware and loke wel that thow ſuppoſe none to be thy frendes withoute that thow haſt aſſayed & proued hym / For I haue lyued lenger than thy ſelf haſte / & vnnethe I haue gete half a frend / wherfore I meruaylle moche how thow haſt geten ſo many frendes / And thenne the ſone ſeynge the admyracion or wonder of his fader / demaunded of hym / My fader . I praye yow that ye wylle gyue to me counceil how I ſhalle nowe preue and eſſaye my frend / And his fader ſayd to hym / goo thou and kylle a calf / and putte it in a ſak al blody / and bere hit to thy fyrſt frend / and ſaye to hym that hit is a man whiche thou haſt ſlayne / And that for the loue of whiche he loueth the / that he wylle kepe thy myſdede ſecretely and burye hit / to thende that he may ſaue the / the which counceylle his ſone dyd / to whome his frend ſayd / retorne ageyne to thy hows / For yf thow haſt done euylle / I wylle not bere the payne for the / For within my hows thow ſhalt not entre / And thus one after other he aſſayed alle his frendes / and euery of them made to hym ſuche an anſuere as the fyrſt dyd / wherof gretely he was abaſſhed / And thenne he retorned ageyn to his fader / and told hym / how he had done / And his fader anſuerd to hym / Many one ben frendes of wordes only /

but

but fewe ben in fayth or dede / but I ſhalle telle to the what thow ſhalt doo / Goo thou to my half frende / and bere to hym thy calf / and thow ſhalt here and ſee what he ſhalle ſaye to the / And whanne the ſone came to the half frende of his fader / he ſayd to hym as he dyd to the other / And whanne the half frende vnderſtode his fayt or dede / he anone toke hym ſecretely in to his hows / and ledde hym in to a ſure and obſcure place / where he dyd burye his dede calf / wherof the ſone knewe the trouthe of the half frendes loue / Thenne the ſone of Arabe torned ageyne toward his fader / and told to hym all that his half frende had done to hym / And thenne the fader ſayd to his ſone / that the philoſopher ſaith that the very and trewe frend is fond in the xtreme nede / Thenne aſked the ſone of his fader / ſaweſt thou neuer man whiche in his lyf gate a hole frend / & his fader ſaid to hym / I ſawe neuer none / but wel haue I herd it ſay / And the ſone anſwered / My fader I praye the that thow wylt reherce hit to me / to thende / that by aduenture I maye gete ſuche one / And the fader ſayd to hym / My ſone / ſom tyme haue I herd of two marchaunts whiche neuer had ſene eche other / the one was of Egypte / and the other was of Baldak but they had knowleche eche of other by theyr lettres /

lettres / whiche they ſente and wrote frendly one to the other / hit befelle thenne that the merchaunt of Baldak came in to egypte for to chepe & bye ſomme ware or marchaundyſe / wherof his frend was moche gladde / and wente to mete hym and brought him benyngly in to his hows / And after that he had chered and feſtyed hym by the ſpace of xiiij dayes / the ſame marchaunt of baldak wexed and became ſeke / wherof his frend was ſorowfull and ful heuy / and Incontynent ſente for phiſycyens or leches thurugh alle egypte for to recouere his helthe / And whan the medecyns had ſene and vyſyted hym / and his vryne alſo / they ſayd that he had no bodyly ſekeness / but that he was rauyſhed by loue / And whan his Frend herd theſe wordes / he came to hym / and ſayd / *My frende I pray the / that thou wilt ſhewe and telle to me thy ſekenes /* And his frend ſaid to hym *I praye the / that thow wylt make to come hyder alle the wymmen* and maydens whiche ben in thy hows / for to ſee / yf the whiche my herte deſyreth is emonge them / And anone his Frend made to come before hym bothe his owne doughters & ſeruants Emonge the whiche was a yonge mayde / whiche he had nouryſhed for his playſyre / And whan the pacyent or ſeke man ſawe her / he ſayd to his frend / the ſame is the whiche maye be cauſe

of

of my lyf or my deth / the whiche his frend gaf to hym for to be his wyf with alle ſuche goodes as he had of her / the whiche he wedded / and retorned with her in to baldak with grete Joye / but within a whyle after it happed and fortuned ſo that this marchaunt of egypte fylle in pouerte / and for to haue ſomme conſolacion and comforte he tooke his way toward baldak / and ſuppoſed to goo and ſee his frend / And aboute one euen he arryued to the Cyte / And for as moche that he was not well arayed ne clothed / he had ſhame by daye lyȝt to go in to the hows of his Frend / but wente and lodged hym withynne a Temple nyghe to a Frendes hows

¶ It happed thenne that on that ſame nyght that he laye there a man ſlewe another man before the yate or entre of the ſayd Temple / wherfore the neyghbours were ſore troubled / And thenne all the peple moeued therof came in to the Temple / wherin they fond no body ſauf only thegypcyen / the whiche they toke / and lyke a murderer Interroged hym why he had ſlayne that man whiche lay dede before the portall or gate of the temple / He thenne ſeynge his Infortune and pouerte / confeſſed / that he had kylled hym / For by cauſe of his euyll fortune he wold rather deye than lyue ony more / wherfore he was had before the Juge / and was condempned

dempned to be hanged / And whan men ledde hym toward the galhows / his frend ſawe and knewe hym / and beganne to wepe ſore / remembryng the bienfayttes whiche he had done to hym / wherfore he went to the Juſtyce and ſayd / My lordes this man dyd not the homycyde / For hit was my ſelf that dyd hit / And therfore ye ſhold do grete ſynne yf ye dyd put this Innocent and gylties to dethe / And anone he was take for be had vnto the galhows / And thenne the Egypcyen ſayd / My lordes / he dyd hit not / And therfore euylle ſhold ye doo to put him to dethe / And as the two frendes wold haue been hanged eche one for other / he whiche had done the homycyde came and knewe and confeſſyd there his ſynne / and adreſſed hym ſelf before the Juſtyce and ſayd / My lordes / none of them bothe hath done the dede / And therfore punyſſhe not ye theſe Innocents / For I allone ought to bere the payne / whereof all the Juſtyſe was gretely merueylled / And for the doubte whiche therin was grete / the Juſtyce toke them al thre / & ledde them before the kyng And when they had reherced to the kynge all the maner / after enqueſt theupon made / and he knewe the very trouthe of hit / graunted his grace to the murderer / and ſo alle thre were delyuerd / And the frend brought his frend in to hys hows / and receyued hym Joyouſly /

and

and after he gaf to hym bothe gold and ſyluer / And the egypcyen torned ageyne in to his hows / And whan the fader had ſayd and reherced all this to his ſone / his ſone ſayd to hym / My fader I knowe now wel that he whiche may gete a good frende is wel happy / And with grete labour as I ſuppoſe I ſhal gete ſuche one.

¶ The ſecond fable is of the commyſtion of pecunn or money

A Spaynard arryued ſomtyme in to the lande of egipte and by cauſe that he doubted to be robbed within the deſertys of Arabe / he purpoſed and bethought in hym ſelf that it were wyſely done to take his money to ſomme trewe man for to kepe hit vnto his retorne ageyne / And by cauſe that he herd ſomme ſaye / that within the Cyte was a trewe man / he anone wente to hym / and toke to hym his ſyluer / for to kepe hit / And whan he had done his vyage he came ageyne to hym / and demaunded of hym his ſyluer / whiche anſwerd to hym in this manere / My frend / I ne wote who thow arte / for I ſawe the neuer that I wote of / And yf thou ſayeſt or ſpekeſt ony more wordes / I ſhalle make the to be wel bete / Thenne was the ſpaynard ſorowful and wroth / and therof he wold haue made a playnte to his neyghbours / as he dyde / & the neyghbours ſayd to hym / Certaynly / we be wel abaſſhed of that / that ye telle to vs / for he is emonge vs alle reputed and

and holden for a good man and trewe / And therfore retorne ageyne to hym / and by ſwete wordes telle hym that he wyl rendre to the thy good ageyne / the whiche thynge he dyd / and the old man anſuerd to hym more ſharpely and wonderly than he had done before / wherof the ſpaynard was wonderly wrothe / And as he departed oute of the old mans hows / he mette with an old woman / the whiche demaunded of hym / wherfore he was ſoo troubled and heuy / And after that he had told to her the cauſe why / thold woman ſayd to hym / make good chere / For yf hit is ſo as thow ſayſt / I ſhalle counceylle the how thou ſhalt recouere thy ſyluer / And thenne he demaũded of her / how hit myght be done / And ſhe ſayd to hym bryng hyther to me a man of thy country whome thow truſteſt / and doo to be made four fayre cheſtes / and fylle them alle with ſtones / and by thy felawes thow ſhalt make them to be borne / in to his hows / and to hym they ſhalle ſay / that the marchaũts of ſpayne ſend them to hym for to kepe ſurely / And whan the cheſtes ſhalle be within his hows / thow ſhalt go and demãde of hym thy ſyluer / whiche thynge he dyd / And as the ſayd cheſtes were borne within his hows / the ſpaynard wente with them / that bare them / the whiche ſtraungers ſayd to the old mã My lord / theſe four

four cheſtes ben al ful of gold / of ſyluer and of precious ſtones / whiche we brynge to yow / as to the treweſt man and feythful that we knowe for to kepe them ſurely by cauſe that we fere and doubte the theues / whiche ben within the deſert / After the whiche wordes ſayd / came he / whiche the old woman had counceylled / and demaunded of hym his ſyluer And by that cauſe the old man doubted / that the ſpanyard wold haue deſpreyſed hym / he ſayd thus to hym / Thow arte Welcome / I merueylled how thow taryeſt ſoo longe for to come / And Incontynent he reſtored to hym his ſyluer / And thus by the counceylle of the woman whiche he gretely thanked / he had his good ageyn / and retourned ageyne in to his countrey /

¶ The thyrd fable ſpeketh of a ſubtyle Enuencion of a ſentence gyuen upon a derke and obſcure cauſe.

It befelle ſomtyme that a good man labourer wente fro lyf to deth / the whiche labourer leſte nothyng to his ſone / but only a hows / the whiche ſone lyued by the laboure of his handes pourely / This yong man had a neyghbour whiche was made ryche whiche demaũded of the ſayd yong man yf he wold ſelle his hows / but he wold not ſelle it / by cauſe that it was come to hym by inherytaũce and by patrymony wherfore the ryche man his neygbour conuerſyd & was ful oft with hym for to deceyue hym / but the yong man fled his company as moche as he myght / & whan the ryche man perceyued that the yong man fled from hym / he bethougt hym ſelf of a grete decepcion & falſhede / & demaũded of the poure yong man that he wold hyre to hym a parte of his hows for to delue & make a celer / the whiche he ſhold hold of hym payeng to hym yerely rent / & the poure yong man hyred it to hym / & whan the

the celer was made / the ryche man did do bryng therin x tones of oylle of the which the v were ful of of oylle / & the the other v were but half full / & dyd do make a grete pytte in the erthe / & dyd do put the fyue tonnes whiche were half ful in hit / & the other fyue aboue them / And thenne he ſhytte the dore of the celer / and delyuerd the keye to the poure yonge man / and prayd hym frawdelently to kepe wel his oylle / but the poure yonge man knewe not the malyce and falſhede of his neyghboure / wherfore he was contente to kepe the keye / And within a whyle after as the oylle became dere / the ryche came to the poure / and aſked hym his good / and the yong man toke to hym the keye / this Ryche man thenne ſold his oylle to the marchaunts / and waraunted eche tonne al ful / And when the marchaunts meſured theyr oylle / they fond but fyue of the x tonnes full / wherof the ryche man demaunded of the poure yonge man reſtitucion / and for to haue his hows he maade hym to come before the Juge / ¶ And whanne the poure man was before the Juge / he demaunded terme and ſpace for to anſwere / For hym thought and ſemed that he had kepte well his oylle / and the Juge gaf and graũted to hym day of aduys / & thẽne he went to a philoſophre which was procuratour of the poure peple / & prayd hym for charyte /

charyte/ that he wold gyue to hym good coũceylle of his grete nede / & he reherced and told to hym al his cauſe & ſwore vpon the holy euangely that he toke none of the ryche mans oylle / And thenne the philoſopher anſuerd to hym in this manere / My ſone / haue no fere / for the trouthe may not faylle / And the next morowe after / the philoſopher wente with the poure man in to Jugement / the whiche philoſopher was conſtitued by the kynge for to gyue the Juſt ſentence of hit / And after that the cauſe had be wel deffended and pleted by bothe partyes / the philoſophre ſayd / the ſame ryche man is of good renommee / and I ſuppoſe not that he demaunded more than he ſhould haue / And alſo I byleue not that this poure may be maculed ne gylty of the blame / which he putteth on hym / but notwithſtondynge for to knowe the trouthe of hit / I ordeyne and gyue ſentence / that the oylle pure and clene of the v tonnes whiche are ful to be meſured / and alſo the lye therof / And after that the pure and clene oylle of the fyue which been but half ful to be alſo meaſured / and with the lye thereof / and that men loke yf the lye of the fyue Tonnes half ful is egal and lyke to the lye of the fyue Tonnes / whiche ben fulle / And yf hit be not soo / that as moche lye be fond within the veſſels whiche ben but half full as in the other / he

he ſhalle thenne be ſuffyſauntly & ryghteoyſly proued / that none oyle hath be taken oute of them / but yf ther be fond as moche lye in the one as in the other / the poure ſhall be condempned / and of this ſentence the poure was contente / & the trouthe was knowen / wherfore the poure man went quyte / and the ryche was condempned / For his grete malyce and falſheed was knowen and manyfeſted / For there is no ſynne or myſdede done / but that ones it ſhalle be knowen and manyfeſted.

¶ The fourthe fable maketh mencion of the ſentence gouen vp the pecuny or money whiche was found.

A Ryche man ſomtyme wente by a Cyte / And as he walked fro one ſyde to that other / fylle fro hym a grete purſe / wherin were a thouſand Crownes / the whiche a poure man fond / and toke them for to kepe to his wyf / wherof ſhe was ful gladde / and ſayd / thanked be god of al the goodes whiche he ſendeth to vs / yf he ſendeth now this grete ſomme kepe we hit wel / And on the next morne after folowyng / the Ryche man made to be cryed thurgh the cyte / that who ſomeuer had fond a thowſand Crownes in a purſe / he ſhold reſtitue / and brynge them to hym ageyne / and that he ſhold haue for his reward an honderd of them / And after that the poure man had herd this crye / he ranne Incontynent to his wyf / & ſayd to her / My wyf / that / that we haue fond muſt be rendred or yolden ageyne / For hit is better to haue a C crownes withoute ſynne than a thowſand with ſynne & wrongfully / And how be

be hit that the woman wold haue refyſted / Neuertheles in thende ſhe was content / And thus the poure man reſtored the thowſand crownes to the Ryche / and demaunded of hym the honderd crownes / And the ryche full of frawde or falſhede ſayd to the poure / thow rendreſt not to me al my gold / whiche thow fondeſt / For of hit I lack four honderd pyeces of gold And whanne thow ſhalt rendre and brynge to me ageyn the ſayd four hondred pyeces of gold / thow ſhalt haue of me the C crownes too whiche I promyſed to the / And thenne the poure anſuerd to hym / I haue take and brought to the al that I haue found / wherfore they fylle in a grete dyfferent or ſtryf / in ſo moche that the cauſe came before the kyng / to be decyded and pletyd / of the whiche the kyng made to be callyd before hym a grete philoſopher whiche was procuratour of the poures / And whanne the cauſe was wel diſputed / the philoſopher moued with pyte / called to hym the poure man / and to hym ſeyd in this maner / Come hyther my frend / by thy feythe haſt thow reſtored alle that good whiche thou fondeſt in the purſe / and the poure anſuerd to hym / ye ſyre by my feythe / And thenne the philoſophre ſayd before thaſſiſtantes / Syth this ryche man is trewe and feythfull / and that hit is not to byleue / that he ſhould demaunde more than

than he ought to doo / he ought to be byleued / And as to the other parte men muſte byleue that this poure man is of good renomme and knowen for a trewe man wherfore the philoſopher ſayd to the kynge / Syre I gyue by my ſentence / that thow take theſe thowſand crownes / and that an C thow take of them / the whiche honderd thow ſhalt delyuere to this poure man whiche fond them / And after whan he that hath loſt them ſhall come / thow reſtore them to hym / And yf it happeth that another perſone fynde the thowſand & four C crownes / they ſhal be rendryd and taken ageyne to the ſame good man whiche is here preſent whiche ſayth that he hath loſt them / the whiche ſentence was moche agreable and pleſaunt to al the companye / And when the ryche man ſawe that he was deceyued / he demaunded myſerycorde and grace of the kynge ſayenge in this manere / Syre this poure man that hath fond my purſe / trewely he hath reſtored it to me all that I ouȝt to haue / but certaynly I wold haue deceyued hym / wherfore I praye the that thou wylt haue pyte and myſerycorde on me And thenne the kynge had myſerycorde on hym / And the poure man was wel contented and payd / and al the malyce of the ryche man was knowen and manyfeſted

¶ The .v. fable is of the feythe of the thre felawes.

OFte it happeth that the euyll whiche is procured to other cometh to hym whiche procureth it / as hit apperyth by the felawes / of the whiche tweyn were burgeys / & the thyrd a labourer / the whiche aſſembled them to gydre for to go to the holy ſepulcre / This thre felawes made ſo grete prouyſyon of flour for to make theyr pylgremage / in ſuche wyſe / that it was all chauffed / and conſumed / excepte only for to make one loef only / And whan the Burgeis ſawe thende of theyre floure they ſayd to gyder / yf we fynde not the maner and cautele for to begyle this vylayn / by cauſe that he is a rygt grete gallaunt / we ſhalle deye for hongre / wherfore we muſt fynde the maner and facyone that we may haue the loof whiche ſhall be maad of alle oure floor / And therfore they concluded to gyder and ſayd / whanne the loof ſhalle be putte within the ouen we ſhalle go and lye vs for to ſlepe / and he that ſhalle dreme beſt / the loof ſhall

ſhall be his / And by cauſe that we bothe ben ſubtyle and wyſe / he ſhalle not mowe dreme as wel as we ſhalle / wherof the loof be ours / wherof alle they thre were wel content / and al byganne to ſlepe /

¶ But whanne the labourer or vylayne knewe and perceyued all theyre ſallace / and ſawe that his two felawes were a ſleep / he wente and drewe the loof oute of the ouen and ete hit / ¶ And after he feyned to be a ſlepe / and thene one of the burgeys roſe vp / and ſayd to hys felawes / I haue dremed a wonder dreme / For two Angels haue taken & borne me with grete Joye before the dyuyn mageſte / And the other burgeys his felawe awoke and ſayd / Thy dreme is merueyllous and wonderfull / but I ſuppoſe that the myn is fayrer / than thyn is / For I haue dremed that two Angels drewe me on hard ground for to lede me in to helle / And after they dyd awake the vylayne whiche as dredeful ſayd / who is there / and they anſuerd / we be thy felawes / And he ſayd to them / how be ye ſoo ſoone retourned / And they anſwerd to hym / how retorned / we departed not yet fro hens / And he ſayd to them by my feythe / I haue dremed that the Angels had led one of yow in to paradys or heuen / and the other in to helle / wherfor I ſuppoſed / that ye ſhold neuer have comen ageyne /

ageyne / And therfore I aroos me fro ſleep / and by cauſe I was hongry / I wente and drewe oute of the ouen the loef and ete hit / For ofte hit happeth that he whiche ſuppoſeth to begyle ſomme other / is hym ſelf begyled.

¶ The vj fable is of the labourer and of the nyghtyngale

Omtyme there was a labourer / whiche had a gardeyn wel playſaunt and moche delycious / in to the whiche he ofte wente for to take his deſporte and playſure / And on a day at euen when he was wery and had trauaylled ſore / for to take his recreacion he entryd in to his gardyn and ſette himſelf doune vnder a tree / where as he herd the ſonge of a nyghtyngale / And for the grete pleſyre and Joye whiche he took therof / he ſought and at the laſt fond the meanes for to take the nyghtyngale / to thende / that yet gretter joye and playſaunce he myght haue of hit / And whan the nyghtyngale was take / he demaunded of the labourer / wherfore haſt thow take ſo grete payne for to take me / For wel thow knoweſt that of me thow mayſt not haue grete prouffyte / And the vylayne anſuerd thus to the nyghtyngale / For to here the ſonge of the I haue taken the / And the nyghtyngale anſuerd Certaynly in vayne thou haſt payned and laboured / For / for no good I wylle

wylle ſynge whyle that I am in pryſon / And thenne the labourer or vylayne anſuerd / yf thow ſyngeſt not wel / I ſhalle ete the / And thenne the nyghtyngale ſayd to hym / yf thow putte me within a potte for to be ſoden / lytyl mete ſhalt thou thenne make of my body / and yf thow ſetteſt me for to be roſted / leſſe mete ſhalle be thenne made of me / And therfor neyther boylled ne roſted ſhalle not be thy grete bely fylled of me / but yf thow lete me flee / hit ſhall be to the a grete good prouffyte / For thre doctrynes I ſhall teche the whiche thow ſhalt loue better than thre fat kyne / and thene the labourer lete the nyghtyngale flee / And whan he was oute of his handes / and that he was vpon a tree / he ſayd to the vylayne in this maner / My Frend I haue promyſed to the / that I ſhall gyue to the thre doctrynes / wherof the fyrſt is this that thow byleue no thynge whiche is Impoſſyble / The ſecond is that thow kepe wel that thyn is / And the thyrd is / that thow take no ſorowe of the thynge loſt whiche may not be recouererd / And ſoone after the nyghtyngale beganne to ſygne / & in his ſonge ſayd thus / bleſſyd be god / whiche hath delyuerd me oute of the handes of this vylayne or chorle / whiche hath not knowen / ſene / ne touched the precious dyamond whiche I haue within my bely / For yf he had foũde hit /

hit / he had be moche ryche / And fro his handes I had not ſcaped / And thenne the vylayne whiche herd this ſonge / beganne to complayne and to make grete ſorowe . and after ſayd I am wel vnhappy / that haue loſt ſo fayre a treſour / whiche I had wonne / and now I haue loſt hit / And the nyghtyngale ſeyd thenne to the chorle / Now knowe I wel that thow arte a fool / For thow takeſt ſorowe of that wherof thow ſholdeſt haue none / and ſone thow haſt forgeten my doctryne / by cauſe that thow weneſt that within my bely ſhold be a precious ſtone more of weyght than I am / And I told and taught to the / that thow ſholdeſt neuer byleue that thynge / which is Impoſſyble / And yf that ſtone was thyn / why haſt thow loſt hit / And yf thow haſt loſt hit and mayſt not recouere hit / why takeſt thow ſorowe for hit / And therfore hit is foly to chaſtyſe or to teche a fole / whiche neuer byleueth the lernynge and doctryne whiche is gyuen to hym.

¶ The vij fable is of a Rethoryᶜian and of a crowk backed /

A Philoſopher ſayd ones to his ſone / that whan he were falle by fortune in to ſomme dommage or perylle / the ſooner that he myght he ſhold delyuere hym of hit / to thende / that afterward he ſhold no more be vexed ne greued of hit / As hit appiereth by this fable of a rethoryque man or fayr ſpeker / whiche ones demaunded of a kynge / that of alle them whiche ſhold entre in to the cyte / hauynge ſomme faulte of . kynde on theyr bodyes / as crouked or counterfayted / he myght haue and take of them at thentre of the yate a peny / the whiche demaunde the kynge graunted to hym / and made his lettres to be ſealed and wreton vnder his ſygnet / And thus he kepte hym ſtyll at the yate / And of euery lame / ſcabbed / & of alle ſuche that had ony counterfaytour on theyr bodyes / he tooke a peny / ¶ It happed thene on a day that a croukbacked and counterfayted man wold haue entryd within the Cyte withoute gyuynge of ony peny / and bethought hym ſelf / that he ſhold take

take and put on hym a fayre mantel / and thus arayed came to the yate / ¶ And thenne whan the porter byheld hym / he perceyued that he was goglyed / and ſayd to hym pay me of my dewte / And the goglyed wold paye nought / wherfore he toke from hym his mantel / And thenne he ſawe that he was crowkbacked and ſayd to hym / thow woldeſt not to fore paye a peny / but now thou ſhalte paye tweyne / ¶ And whyle that they ſtryued to gyder / the hat and the bonet felle from his hede to the erthe / And the porter whiche ſawe his ſcabbed hede / ſayd to hym / Now ſhalt thou paye to me thre pens / and thenne the porter yet ageyne ſetted his handes on hym / and felte / that his body was al ſcabbed / And as they were thus wraſtlynge to gyder / the crowkbacked fylle to the ground / and hurted hym ſelf ſore on the legge / And the porter ſayd thenne to hym / Now ſhalt thow paye v pens / For thy body is al counterfayted / wherfore thow ſhalt leue here thy mantele / And yf thou haddeſt payd a peny / thow haddeſt gone on thy waye free and quyte / wherfore he is wyſe that payeth that / that he oweth of ryght / to thende that therof come not to hym gretter dommage

¶ The eyght fable is of the diſcyple / and of the ſheep /

Diſcyple was ſomtyme / whiche toke his playſyre to reherce and telle many fables / the whiche prayd to his mayſter / that he wold reherce vnto hym a long fable / To whome the mayſter anſuerd / kepe and beware wel that hit happe not to vs / as it happed to a kyng and to his fabulatour And the diſcyple anſuerd / My mayſter I pray the to telle to me how it befelle / And thenne the mayſter ſayd to his deſcyple / ¶ Somtyme was a kynge whiche hadde a fabulatour / the whiche reherced to hym at euery tyme / that he wold ſleep fyue fables for to reioyſſhe the kynge / and for to make hym falle in to a ſlepe / It befelle thenne on a daye / that the kynge was moche ſorowful and ſo heuy / that he coude in no wyſe falle a ſlepe / And after that the ſayd fabulatour had told and reherced his fyue fables / the kynge deſyred to here more / And thenne the ſayd fabulatour recyted vnto hym thre fables wel ſhorte / And the kynge thenne ſayd to hym / I wold

wold fayne here one wel longe / And thenne ſhalle I leue wel the ſlepe / The fabulatour thenne reherced vnto hym ſuche a fable / Of a ryche man whiche wente to the market or feyre for to bye ſheep / the which man bought a thowſand ſheep / And as he was retornynge fro the feyre / he cam vnto a Ryuer / and by cauſe of the grete waiues of the water he coude not paſſe ouer the brydge / Neuertheles he wente ſoo longe to and fro on the Ryuage of the ſayd Ryuer / that at the laſt he fonde a narowe way / vpon the whiche myght paſſe ſcant ynough thre ſheep attones / And thus he paſſed and had them ouer one after another / And hyderto reherced of this fable / the fabulatour felle on ſlepe / And anon after the kynge awoke the fabulatour / and ſayd to hym in this manere / I pray the that thow wylt make an ende of thy fable / And the fabulatour anſuerd to hym in this manere Syre this Ryuer is ryght grete / and the ſhip is lytyl / wherfore late the marzhaunt doo paſs ouer his ſheep / And after I ſhalle make an ende of my fable / And thenne was the kynge wel appeaſed and pacyfyed / ¶ And therfore be thow content of that I haue reherced vnto the / For there is folke ſuperſtycious or capaxe / that they may not be contented with fewe wordes

¶ The ix fable is of the wulf / of the labourer / of the foxe / & of the cheſe

Omtyme was a labourer wgiche vnnethe myght gouerne and lede his oxen by cauſe that they ſmote with theyr feet / wherfore the labourer ſayd to them / I pray to god that the wulf may ete yow / the whiche wordes the wulf herd / wherfore he hyd hym ſelf nyghe them vnto the nyght / And thenne came for to ete them / ¶ And whanne the nyght was come / the labourer vnbonde his oxen / and lete them goo to his hows / ¶ And thenne whanne the wulf ſawe them comynge homeward / he ſayd / O thow labourer many tymes on this day thow dydeſt gyue to me thyn oxen / and therfore hold thy promeſſe to me / ¶ And the labourer ſayd to the wulf / I promyſed to the nought at al / in the preſence of whome I am oblyged or bound / I ſwore not neyther to paye the / and the wulf anſuerd / I ſhalle not leue the goo / withoute that thow hold to me that / that thow promyſeſt and gaueſt to me / ¶ And as they had ſoo grete ſtryf and deſcencion to gyder / they remytted the

the cauſe to be diſcuted or pleted before the Juge / And as they were ſechynge a Juge / they mette with the foxe / to whome they recounted or told alle theyr dyfferent and ſtryf / ¶ Thenne ſayd the Foxe vnto them / I ſhalle accorde yow bothe wel / and I ſhalle gyue on your cauſe or plee a good ſentence / But I muſt ſpeke with eche one of yow bothe a part or allone / And they were content / ¶ And the Foxe wente and told to the labourer / thow ſhalt gyue to me a good henne / And another to my wyf / And I ſhalle hit ſoo make / that thow with alle thyn oxen ſhalt frely goo vnto thy hows / wherof the labourer was wel content / ¶ And after the foxe wente and ſayd to the wulf / I haue wel laboured and wrought for the / For the labourer ſhall gyue to the therfore a grete cheſe / and lete hym goo home wyth his oxen / And the wulf was wel content /

¶ And after the Foxe ſayd to the wulf / come thow wyth me / and I ſhalle lede the / where as the cheſe is / ¶ And thenne he ledde hym to and fro / here and there vnto the tyme that the mone ſhyned ful bryghtly / And that they came to a welle / vpon the whiche the Foxe lepte / and ſhewed to the wulf the ſhadowe of the mone / whiche reluced in the well / & ſayd to hym / loke now godſep / how that cheſe is fayre /

grete

grete and brode / hye the now and goo doune & after take that cheſe / ¶ And the wulf ſayd to the Foxe / thow muſt be the fyrſte of vs bothe / that ſhalle goo doune / And yf thow mayſt not brynge hit with the / by cauſe of his greteneſſe / I ſhalle thenne goo doune for to helpe the / And the Foxe was content / by cauſe two bokettys were there / of whiche as the one came vpward / the other wente dounward / and the foxe entryd in to one of the ſame bokettis / and wente doune in to the Welle / And whanne he was doune / he ſayd to the wulf / godſep come hyther and helpe me / For the cheſe is ſo moche and ſoo grete that I maye not bere hit vp / and thenne the wulf was aferd of that the Foxe ſhold ete hit / entryd wythynne the other boket / and as faſte as he wente dounward / the Foxe came vpward / and whan the wulf ſawe the Foxe comynge vpward / he ſayd to hym / My godſep ye goo hens / thow ſayſt trewe ſayd the Fox / For thus hit is of the world / For when one cometh doune / the other goth vpward / and thus the foxe wente awey / and lefte the wulf within the welle / And thus the wulf loſt bothe the oxen and the cheſe / wherfore hit is not good to leue that whiche is ſure and certayne / For to take that whiche is vncertayne / For many one ben therof deceyued by the falſheed and decepcion of the Aduocate and of the Juges

¶ The x fable is of the huſbond and of the moder & of hys wyf

Omtyme was a merchaunt whiche maryed hym to a yonge woman / the whiche had yet her moder on lyue / It happed that this Marchaunt wold ones haue gone ſomwhere in to ferre country for to by ſome ware or marchaundyſe / And as he was goynge / he betoke his wyf to her moder for to kepe and rewle her honeſtly tyll he come ageyne / ¶ His wyf thenne . by the owne conſentynge and wylle of her moder / enamoured her ſelf of a ryght gentyl / fayre and yong man whiche fournyſſhed to thappoyntement / And ones as they thre made good chere the huſbond came ageyne fro the feyre and knocked at the dore of the hows / wherfore they were wel abaſſhed / Thenne ſayd the old moder thus to them / haue no fere / but doo as I ſhalle telle to yow / and care yow not / And thenne ſhe ſayd to the yonge man / hold this ſwerd / and goo thow to the yate / and beware thy ſelf that thow ſaye no word to hym / but lete me doo / And as the huſbond wold haue entyrd

entryd his hows / and that he ſawe the yong man holdynge a naked ſwerd in his handes / he was gretely aferd / And thenne the old woman ſayd to hym / My ſone thow arte ryght welcome / be not aferd of this man / For thre men ranne ryght now after hym for to haue ſlayne hym / and by auenture he fond the yate open / and this is the cauſe why he came here for to ſaue his lyf / And thenne the huſbond ſaid to them / ye haue done wel / And I can yow grete thanke / And thus the yonge amerous wente his waye ſurely by the ſubtylyte of the moder / of his wyf / to the whiche truſte thy ſelf not / and thow ſhalt doo as ſage and wyſe

¶ The xj fable is of an old harlotte or bawde

A Noble man was ſomtyme / whiche had a wyf moche chaſte and was wonder fayr / This noble man wold haue go on pylgrimage to Rome / and lefte his wyf at home / by cauſe that he knewe her for a chaſte and a good woman / ¶ It happed on a daye as ſhe wente in to the toun A fayre yonge man was eſpryſed of her loue / and took on hym hardynes / and requyred her of loue / and promyſed to her many grete yeftes / But ſhe whiche was good had leuer deye than to conſente her therto / wherfore the yonge man deyde almooſte for ſorowe / to the whiche felawe came an old woman / whiche demaunded of hym the cauſe of his ſekeneſſe / And the yonge man manyfeſted or deſcouered vnto her alle his courage and herte / aſkynge help and counceylle of her / And the old woman wyly and malycious ſayd to hym / Be thow gladde and Joyous / and take good courage / For wel I ſhalle doo / and brynge aboute thy faytte / in ſoo moche thow ſhalt haue thy wyll fulfylled / And after thys the old bawde wente to her hows / and

and maade a lytyl catte which ſhe hadde at homme to faſte thre dayes one after another / And after ſhe took ſomme breed with a grete dele or quantite of moſtard vpon hit / and gaf hit to thys yonge Catte for to ete hit / ¶ And whanne the Catte ſmelled hit / ſhe beganne to wepe and crye / ¶ And the old woman or Bawde wente vnto the hows of the ſayd yonge woman / and bare her lytyl Catte with her / the whiche yonge and good woman receyued and welcomed her moch honeſtly / by cauſe that alle the world held her for a holy woman / ¶ And as they were talkynge to gyder / the yong woman hadde pyte of the catte whiche wepte / And demaunded of the old woman / what the cat eyled / And the old woman ſayd to her / Ha a my fayr doughter & my fayre Frend / renewe not my sorowe / And ſayinge theſe wordes ſhe beganne to wepe / and ſayd / My frend for no good I wyl tell the cauſe why my catte wepeth / And thenn / the yonge woman ſayd to her / My good Moder I praye yow that ye wyll telle me the cauſe & wherfor your catte wepeth / And thenne the old woman ſayd to her / My Frend I wyll wel / yf thow wilt ſwere that thou ſhalt neuer reherce it to no body / to the whiche promeſſe the good and trewe yonge woman accorded her ſelf / ſuppoſyng / that hit had ben all good

and

and ſayd / I wyll wel / And thenne the old woman ſayd to her in this manere / My frend this ſame catte whiche thow ſeeſt yonder was my daughter / the whiche was wonder fayre gracious and chaſte / whiche a yonge man loued moche / and was ſo moche eſpryſed of her loue / that by cauſe that ſhe refuſed hym / he deyde for her loue / wherfore the goddes hauyng pyte on hym / haue torned my daughter in to this catte / And the yonge woman whiche ſuppoſed that the old woman had ſayd trouthe ſayd to her in this manere / Alias my fayr moder / I ne wote what I ſhalle doo / For ſuche a caas myght wel happe to me / For in this Towne is a yonge man / whiche deyeth almoſt for the loue of me / But for loue of my huſband / to whome I oughte to kepe chaſtyte / I haue not wylle graunte hym / Neuertheles I ſhall doo that / that thow ſhalt counceylle to me / And thenne the old woman ſayd to her / My frend haue thow pyte on hym as ſoone as thow mayſt / ſoo that hit befalle not to the lyke as it dyd to my doughter /

¶ The yonge woman thenne anſwerd to her / and ſayd / yf he requyre me ony more / I ſhalle accorde me with hym / And yf he requyre me no more / yet ſhalle I profere me to hym / ¶ And to thende / that I offende not the goddes / I ſhalle doo and accomplyſſhe hit / as ſoone as I maye /

¶ The

¶ The old woman thene took leue of her / and wente forthwith to the yong man / And to hym ſhe reherced and told all theſe tydynges / wherof hys herte was fylled with Joye / the whiche anone wente toward the yonge woman / and with her he fulfylled his wylle / ¶ And thus ye maye knowe the euyls / whiche ben done by bawdes and old harlottes / that wold to god / that they were al brente

¶ The xij fable is of a blynd man and of his wyf /

THere was ſomtyme a blynd man whiche had a fayre wyf / of the whiche he was moche Jalous / He kepte her ſo that ſhe myght not goo nowher / For ewer he had her by the hand / And after that ſhe was enamoured of a gentil felawe / they coude not fynde the maner ne no place for to fulfylle theyr wyll / but notwithſtandyng the woman whiche was ſubtyle and Ingenyous counceylled to her frende that he ſhold come in to her hows / and that he ſhold entre in the gardyn and that there he ſhold clymme vpon a pere tree / And he did as ſhe told hym / and when they had made theyr enterpryſe / the woman came ageyne in to the hows / and ſayd to her huſbond / My frend I praye yow that ye wylle go in to our gardyn for to deſpoſe us a lytel whyle there / of the whiche prayer the blynd man was wel content / and ſayd to his wyf / wel my good frend I will wel / lete vs go thyder / And as they were vnder the pere tree / ſhe ſayd to her huſbond / My frende I praye the

to

to lete me goo vpon the pere tre / And I ſhalle gader for vs bothe ſome fayre peres / wel my frend ſayd the blynd man / I wylle wel & graũt therto / And when ſhe was vpon the tree / the yong man begann to ſhake the pere tree at one ſyde / and the yonge woman at the other ſyde / And And as the blynd man herd thus hard ſhake the pere tree / And the noyſe whiche they made / he ſayd to them / Ha a euyelle woman / how be it that I ſee hit not / Neuertheles I fele and vnderſtande hit well / But I praye to the goddes / that they vouchefauf to ſende me my ſyght ageyne / And as ſoone as he had made his prayer Jupiter rendryd to hym his ſyght ageyn ¶ And whanne he ſawe that pagent vpon the pere tree / he ſayd to his wyf Ha vnhappy woman / I ſhalle neuer haue no Joye with the / And by cauſe that the yonge woman was redy in ſpeche and malycious / ſhe anſuerd forth with to her huſbond / My frend thow arte wel beholden and bounden to me / For by cauſe and for the loue the goddes haue reſtored to the thy ſyght / wherof I thanke alle the goddes and godeſſes whiche haue enhaunced and herd my prayer / For I deſyryng moche that thow myght ſee me / ceſſed neuer day ne nyght to pray them / that theye wold rendre to the thy ſyghte / wherfore the goddeſſe Venus vyſybly ſhewed her ſelf

to

to me / and ſayd / that yf I wold ſomme play-ſyre to the ſayd yonge man ſhe ſhold reſtore to the thy ſyght / And thus I am cauſe of it And thenne the good man ſayd to her / My ryght dere wyf & good frende / I remercye and thanke yow gretely / For ryght ye haue and I grete wronge.

¶ The xiij fable is of the Tayller / of a kynge / and of his ſeruaunts

MEn ought not to doo ſome other / that whiche he wold not that it were done to hym / As it appiereth by this preſent fable / of a kynge whiche had a tayller whiche was as good a workman of his craft / as ony was at that tyme in alle the world / the whiche tayller had with hym many good ſeruauntes / wherof the one was called Medius / whiche ſurmounted alle the other in ſhapynge or ſewynge / wherfore the kyng commaunded to his ſtyward that the ſayd tayllers ſhold fare wel / and haue of the beſt metes and of delycious drynke / ¶ It happed on a daye that the mayſter Styward gaf to them ryght good and delycious mete in the whiche was ſome hony / And by cauſe that Medius was not atte that feſte / the ſtyward ſayd to the other / that they ſhold kepe for hym ſomme of their mete / And thenne the mayſter tayller anſuerd / he muſt none haue / For yf he were here / he ſhold

ſhold not ete of hit / For he ete neuer no hony / And as they had done / Medius came / and demaunded of his felawes / why kepte you not parte of this mete for me / And the ſtyward anſuerd and ſayd to hym / By cauſe that thy mayſter ſayd to me / that thow ete neuer no hony / no parte of the mete was kepte for the And Medius anſuerd thenne neuer one word / but beganne to thynke / how he myght paye his mayſter / And on a day as the ſtyward was allone with Medius / he demaunded of Medius / yf he knewe no man that coude werke as wel as his mayſter / And Medius ſayd nay / And that it was grete dommage of a ſekeneſs that he had / And the ſtyward demaunded what ſekeneſs hit was / And thenne Medius anſuerd to hym / My lord whan he is entryd in to his frauſy or wodenes / there cometh vpon hym a rage / And how ſhalle I knowe hit ſayd the ſtyward / Certaynly my lord ſayd Medius / whan ye ſhall ſee that he ſhalle ſette at his werke / and that he ſhalle loke here and there / and ſhal ſinyte vpon his borde with his fyſt / thene may ye know that his ſekeneſſe cometh on hym / And thene withoute ye take and bynde hym and alſo bete hym wel / he ſhalle doo grete harme and dommage / And the ſtyward ſayd to hym / Care not therof my frend / For wel I ſhalle beware my ſelf

ſelf of hym / And on the mornynge next folowynge the ſtyward came for to ſee the tayllers / And whan Medius whiche knewe wel the cauſe of his comynge / tooke awaye ſecretely his mayſters ſheres / and hydde them / And anone his mayſter beganne for to loke after them / and ſawe and ſerched al aboute here and there / and beganne to ſmyte his fyſte vpon the borde / And thenne the mayſter ſtyward beganne to loke on his maners / and sodenly made hym to be take and holde by his ſeruaunts / And after made hym to be bond and wel beten / Thenne was the mayſter tayller al abaſſhed / and demaũded of them / My lordes wherfor doo ye bete me ſoo outrageouſly / what offenſe haue I done / wherfore I muſt be bound and thus be bete / And thenne the Styward ſayd to hym in thys maner / by cauſe that Medius told me / that thow art frantyk And yf thow be not wel bete / thow ſholdeſt doo grete harme and dommage / And thene the mayſter came to his ſeruaunt Medius and rygorouſly ſayd to hym / Ha a euyl boye fylled whan [with] euylle wordes / whan ſaweſt thow me madde / And his ſeruaunt proudely anſuerd to hym / My mayſter whan dydeſt thow ſee that I ete no houy / And therfore I threwe to the one bole for another / And the mayſter ſtyward / and alle his ſeruaunts beganne thenne to

lawhe

lawhe / and ſayd al that he hadde wel done / ¶ And therfore men ought not to doo to ony other that thynge whiche they wylle not that men dyd to them /

¶ Here enden the fables of Alfonce

¶ And folowen other fables of Poge the Florentyn

¶ The fyrſt fable is of the ſubtylyte of the woman for to deceyue her huſbond

He cautele or falſhede of the woman is wonder merueyllous / as it appiereth by this fable / Of a marchaũt whiche was wedded of newe vnto a fayre and yong woman / the whiche marchaunt wente ouer the ſee for to bye & ſelle / and for to gete ſomwhat for to lyue honeſtly / And by cauſe that he dwellyd to longe / his wyf ſuppoſed that he was dede / And therfore ſhe enamoured her ſelf with another man / whiche dyd to her mykle good / as for to haue deo make and bylde vp his hows of newe the whiche had grete nede of reparacion / and alſo he gaf to her all new vtenſyles to kepe houſhold / And within a long tyme after the departyng of the marchaunt he came ageyne in to his hows whiche he ſawe newe bylded / & ſawe dyſſhes pottes / pannes / and ſuche other houſhold / wherfore he demaunded of his wyf how and in what maner ſhe had foũde the facion and the mean for to haue repayred ſo honeſtly his hows / And ſhe anſuerd that it was by the grace of god / And he

he anſuerd / Bleſſyd be god of hit / And when he was within the chambre / he ſawe the bedde rychely couerd / & the walles wel hanged / and demaunded of his wyf he had done before / And ſhe thenne anſuerd to hym in lyke maner as ſhe dyd before / And therfore he thanked god as he had done to fore / And as he wold ſette hym at his dyner / there was brought before hym vnto his wyf a child of thre yere of age / or there aboute / wherfore he demaunded of his wyf / My frend to whome belongeth this fayre child / And ſhe anſuerd / My Frend the holy ghooſt of his grace hath ſente hit to me / Thene anſuerd the merchaunt to his wyf in this manere / I rendre not graces ne thankes not to the holy ghooſt of this / For he hath taken to moche payne and labour for to haue it made up myn owne werke / And I wyll that in no maner wyſe he medle no more therwith / For ſuche thynge belongeth to me for to doo hit / and not to the holy ghooſt.

¶ The ſecond fable is of the woman and of the ypocryte

THe generacion or byrth of the ypocryte is moche dampnable and euylle / As it appiereth by this fable / and as poge reherceth to vs whiche ſayth / that ſomtyme he fond hym ſelf in a good felauſhip / where he herd a fable / whiche was there reherced / Of the whiche the tenour foloweth / and ſeyth the ſayd poge / that of alle the goodes of this world / the ypocrytes ben poſſeſſours / For how be hit / that an ypocryte haue ſomtyme wylle for to helpe ſomme poure and Indygent / Neuertheles he hath a condycyon within hym ſelf / that is to wete / that he ſhold rather ſee a man at the poynt of dethe than for to ſaue his lyf of an halfpeny / And this preſumpcion is called ypocryſye / as ye ſhal here herafter by the fable folowyng the whiche ſayth that one beynge in the felauſhip of Poge reherced / that ſomtyme the cuſtomme of alle the poure was that they wente before the folkes dores withoute ſayenge ony word It happed thenne on that tyme that a poure man moche

moche faire and of good lyf wente to ſerche his lyf fro one dore to another / And vpon a day emonge other he wente and ſette hym ſelf vpon a grete ſtone before the yate of a wydowe / whiche wydowe was acuſtommed to gyue hym euer ſomwhat / ¶ And whan the good woman knewe that he was at hir dore ſhe dyd brynge to hym his porcion as ſhe was cuſtommed for to doo / And as ſhe gaf to hym the mete ſhe loked on hym / and ſeyng hym ſoo fayre / and wel made of body / ſhe thenne fylled of carnal concupiſcence / and brennynge in the fyre of loue / requered and Inſtantly prayd hym that he wold retorne thyder within thre dayes / and promyſed to him that ſhe ſhold gyue to hym a ryght good dyner / And the poure man ſayd to her that he ſhold doo ſoo / and whanne he came ageyne / he ſette hym ſelf as before / atte dore of the wydowes hows / whiche the woman knewe well whanne he ſhold come / wherfore ſhe came to the yate and ſayd / Come within good man / For now we ſhalle dyne / to the whiche prayer the poure man aſſented / & entred within the hows / the whiche wydowe gaf to hym good mete / and good drynke / And whanne they had wel dyned / the ſayd wydowe preſſyd the good man ſtrongly and after ſhe kyſſed hym / requyrynge hym / that ſhe might haue the copye of his loue / And thēne

the

the poure man al aſhamed & vergoynous knowynge her thoughte and her wylle / anſuerd thus to her Certaynly my good lady I dare not / but neuertheles he wold fayne haue done hit / And the wydowe al embraced with loue beſeched and prayd hym more and more / And thenne whan the poure man ſawe that he myght not excuſe hym ſelf / he ſayd to the wydowe in this manere / My frend ſyth that thow deſyreſt it for to doo ſoo moche and ſoo grete an euylle / I take god to my wytnes / that thow arte cauſer of hit / For I am not conſentynge to the faytte or dede / but ſayenge theſe wordes he conſented to her wylle

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¶ The thyrd fable is of a ponge woman whiche accuſed her huſbond of coulpe or blame

[Omitted. *Cf.* Poggio *Facetiæ* 45.]

¶ The fourth fable is of the huntynge and hawkynge

POge Florentyn reherceth to vs / how ones he was in a felaufhip where men fpak of the fuperfluе cure of them whiche gouerne the dogges and hawkes / wherof a mylannoys named Paulus beganne to lawhe / and lawhyng requyred of Poge that he wold reherce fomme fable of the fayd hawkes / And for loue of alle the felaufhip he fayd in thys manere / Somtyme was a medecyn whiche was a Mylannoys This medecyn heled al foles of al maner of foly / and how & in what manere he dyd hele them / I fhall telle hit to you This medycyn or leche had within his hows a grete gardyn And in the myddes of hit was a depe and a brode pytte / whiche was ful of ftynkynge and Infected water / And within the fame pytte the fayd medycyn put the foles after the quantyte of theyr folyfhnes / fomme vnto the knes / and the other vnto the bely / And there he bonde them fait at a poft / but none he putte depper / than vnto the ftomack for doubte of gretter Inconuenient / It happed

happed thenne that emonge other was one brought to hym / whiche he putte in to the ſayd water vnto the thyes / And whan he had be by the ſpace of xv dayes within the ſayd water / he beganne to be peaſyble and gate his wytte ageyne / And for to haue take ſomme diſporte and conſolacion he prayd to hym whiche had the kepynge of hym that he wold take hym oute of the water / and promyſed to hym that he ſhold not departe fro the gardyn / And thenne the kepar that kepte hym vnbounde hym fro the ſtake / and had hym oute of the water / And whanne he had be many dayes oute of the pytte / he wente wel vnto the yate of the gardyn / but he durſt not go oute / leſſe that he ſhold be put ageyne within the ſayd pytte / And on a tyme he went aboue vpon the yate / and as he loked al aboute / he ſawe a fayr yong man on a horſbak / whiche bare a ſperehawk on his fyſte / and had with hym two fayre ſpaynels / whereof the ſayd fole was al abaſſhed / And in dede as by caas of nouelte / he callyd the ſayd yong man / and after he ſayd to hym benyngly / My frend I praye the that thou wilt telle me what is that wherupon thow arte ſette / And thenne the yonge ſone ſayd to hym / that it was a hors whiche prouffited to hym to the chace / and bare hym where he wold / And after the fole demaunded of hym / And what is that

whiche

whiche thou bereſt on thy fyſte / and wher to is it good / and the yong man anſuerd to hym / It is a ſperehawk whiche is good for to take partryches and quayſles / And yet ageyne the ſole demaunded of hym / My frend what are thoos that folowe the / & wherto ben they good / And the yonge man anſuerd to hym / they be dogges whiche are good for to ſerche and fynde partryches & quayſles / And whan they haue reyſed them / my ſperehawke taketh them / wherof procedeth to me grete ſolas and playſyre / And the ſole demaunded ageyne / To your aduys the takyng that ye doo by them in a hole yere / how moche is hit / ſhalle hit bere to the grete prouffyte / And the yong man anſuerd to hym four or fyue crownes or ther aboute / And no more ſayd the ſole / And to your aduys how moche ſhalle they diſpende in a yere / And the yong man anſuerd xl or l crownes / ¶ And whanne the ſole herd theſe wordes / he ſayd to the ſayd yonge man / O my frend I pray the that ſoone thow wylt departe fro hens / For yf our fyſicien come / he ſhalle putte the within the ſayd pytte by cauſe that thow arte a ſole / I was put in it vnto the thyes / but therin he ſhold putte the vnto the chynne / for thow doſt the gretteſt folye that euer I herd ſpeke of / ¶ And therfore the ſtudye of the huntynge and hawkynge is a ſouful cure / And

none

none ought to doo hit withoute he be moche ryche and man of lyuelode / And yet hit ought not to be done ful ofte / but ſomtyme for to take diſporte and ſolas / and to dryue awey melancholye.

¶ The .b. fable is of the recytacion of fomme monſtres

POge of Florence recyteth how in his tyme one named Hugh prynce of the medycyns / ſawe a catte whiche had two hedes and a calf whiche alſo had two hedes And his legges bothe before and behynde were double / as they had be Joyned al to gyder / as many folke ſawe / Item about the marches of ytalye withynne a medowe was ſomtyme a Cowe / the whiche Cowe maade and delyuerd her of a ſerpent of wonder and Ryght merueyllous gretteneſſe / Ryghte hydous and ferdful / ¶ For fyrſte he hadde the heede gretter than the hede of a calf / ¶ Secondly / he had a necke of the lengthe of an Aſſe / And his body made after the lykeneſſe of a dogge / and his taylle was wonder grete / thycke and longe withoute comparyſon to ony other .

¶ And whanne the Cowe ſawe that ſhe hadde maade ſuche a byrthe / And that within her bely ſhe had borne ſoo ryght horryble a beeſte / ſhe was al ferdful / and lyfte her ſelf up / and ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed to haue ſledde aweye / but the Serpent with his wonder longe taylle enlaced her two hynder legges / And the Serpent thenne beganne to ſouke the Cow / And in dede ſoo moche / and ſoo longe he ſouked tylle that he fond ſomme mylke / ¶ And whanne the Cowe myght eſcape fro hym / ſhe ſledde vnto the other kyne / ¶ And Incontynent her pappes and her behynder legges and all that the Serpent touched was all black a grete ſpace of tyme ¶ And ſoone after the ſayd Cowe maade a fayre calf / The whiche merueylle was announced or ſayd to the ſayd Pope he beynge atte Ferrare / ¶ And yet ageyne ſoone after that / ther was fond within a grete Ryuer a monſtre maryn / or of the ſee of the forme or lykneſſe whiche ſoloweth /

¶ Fyrſte he hadde from the nauylle vpward the ſymplytude or lykeneſſe of a man / And fro the nauylle dounward / he had the fourme or makynge of a Fyſihe / the whiche parte was inmelle that is to wete double / ¶ Secondly he hadde a grete berd / and he hadde two wonder grete hornys aboue his eres / ¶ Alſo he hadde grete pappes / and a wonder grete and horryble mouthe / and his handes retched unto his entraylles or bowellys / And at the bothe his elbowes he hadde wynges ryght brode and grete

of

of fyſſhes mayles / wherwith he ſwymmed / and only he hadde but the hede oute of the water / ¶ It happed thenne as many wymmen bouked and weſſhed at the porte or hauen of the ſayd Ryuer / that thys horryble and ferdfull beeſte was / for lacke and defaulte of mete cam & ſwymmyng toward the ſayd wymen / Of the which he toke one by the hand / and ſuppoſed to haue drawe her in to the water / but ſhe was ſtronge / and wel auyſed and refyſted ageynſte the ſayd monſtre / And as ſhe deffended her ſelf / ſhe beganne to crye with a hyhe voys / help help / to the whiche came rennynge fyue wymmen / whiche by hurlynge and drawynge of ſtones kyld and ſlewe the ſayd monſtre / For he was come to ferre within the ſonde / wherfore he myght not retorne in the depe water / And after whanne he rendryd his ſpyryte / he made a ryght lytyl crye / ſayenge wo that he was ſo deformed and ſoo moche cruel / For he was of grete corpulence more than ony man's body / And yet ſayth Poge in this manere / that he beyng at Ferrare he ſawe the ſayd monſtre / And ſaith yet / that the yonge children were cuſtomed for to go bathe and weſſhe them within the ſayd Ryuer / but they came not all ageyne / wherfore the wymen weſſhed ne bouked nomore theyr clothes at the ſaid porte / For the folke preſumed and ſuppoſed that

that the monſtre kyld the yonge children / whiche were drowned / ¶ Jtem alſo within a lytyl whyle after hit befelle aboute the marches of ytaly that a child of fourme humayne whiche hadde two hedes and two vyſages or faces beholdynge one vpon the other / & the armes of eche other embraced the body / the whiche body fro the nauyl vpward was Joyned ſauf the two hedes / and from the nauyll dounward the lymmes were all ſepared one fro other in ſuche wyſe that the lymmes of generacion were ſhewed many-fẽſily / Of the whiche child the tydynges came vnto the perſone of the pope of Rome

¶ The ſyxthe fable is of the parſone / of his dogge / And of the Biſſhop

YLuer dothe and cauſeth alle thynge to be done vnto the halowynge ageyne of a place whiche is prophane or Interdicte / As ye ſhalle mowe here by thys preſente Fable / ¶ Of a preeſt dwellynge in the countrey whiche ſomtyme had a dogge / whiche he loued moche / the whiche preeſt was moche ryche / The ſayd dogge by proceſſe of tyme deyde / & whan he was dede / he entered and buryed hit in the chirche yerd for cauſe of the grete loue whiche he loued hym / it happed thenne on a day his biſſhop knewe hit by thaduertyſement of ſomme other / wherfore he ſente for the ſayd preeſt / and ſuppoſed to haue of hym a grete ſomme of gold / or els he ſhold make hym to be ſtraytly punyſſhed / And thenne he wrote a lettre vnto the ſayd preeſt of whiche the tenour conteyned only that he ſhold come and ſpeke with hym / And whan the preſt had redde the lettres / he vnderſtood wel alle the caas / and preſuppoſed or bethought in his courage / that he wold haue of hym ſomme ſyluer /

ſyluer / For he knewe wel ynough the condycions of his biſſhop / & forth with he toke his breuyarye / & an C crownes with hym / the prelate beganne to remembre and to ſhewe to hym the enormyte of his myſdede / And to hym anſwerd the preeſt whiche was ryght wyſe ſayenge in this manere / O my ryght reuerende fader / yf ye knewe the ſouerayne prudence of whiche the ſayd dogge was fylled / ye ſhold not be merueylled yf he hath wel deſernyd for to be buryed honeſtly and worſhipfully amonge the men / he was al fylled with humayn wytte as wel in his lyf / as in thartycle of the dethe / And thenne the biſſhop ſayd / how may that be / reherce to me thenne al his lyf / Certaynly ryght reuerende fader ye ought wel to knowe that whanne he was atte thartycle and at the poynt of dethe / he wold make his teſtament / And the dogge knowyng your grete nede and Indygence / he bequethed to yow an C crownes of gold / the whiche I brynge now vnto yow / And thenne the Biſſhop for loue of the money he aſſoylled the preſt And alſo graunted the ſayd ſepulture / And therfore ſyluer cauſeth alle thynge to be graunted or done.

¶ The vij fable is of the Foxe of the Cock and of the dogges

lle the ſallary or payment of them that mokken other is for to be mocqued at the laſt / as hit appiereth by this preſent Fable / of a Cock whiche ſomtyme ſawe a foxe comynge toward hym ſore hongry and famyſihed / whiche Cock ſuppoſed Wel that he came not toward hym / but for to ete ſomme henne / for whiche cauſe the Cock maade al his hennes to flee vpon a tree / And whan the foxe beganne tapproche to the ſaid tree / he began to crye toward the cock good tydynges good tydynges / And after he ſalewed the cok ryght reuerently / & demaunded of hym thus / O godſep / what doſt thow ther ſoo hyghe / And thy hennes with the / haſt not thow herd the good tydynges worthy and prouffitable for vs ¶ And thenne the Cok ful of malyce anſuerd to hym / Nay veryly godſep / but I praye the / telle and reherce them vnto vs / Thenne ſayd the foxe to the cok / Certaynly godſep / they be the beſt that euer ye herd / For ye may goo and come / talke

talke and communyque emong alle beeſtes without ony harme or dommage / And they ſhalle doo to yow bothe pleaſyr and alle ſeruyſe to them poſſible / for thus it is concluded and accorded / and alſo confermed by the grete counceyll of all beſtes / And yet they haue made commaundement that none be ſo hardy to vexe ne lette in no wyſe ony other / be it neuer ſoo lytyll a beeſt / For the whiche good tydynges I praye the / that thow wylt come doune / to thende / that we may goo and ſynge / Te deum laudamus / for Joye / And the cok whiche knewe wel the fallaces or falſhede of the foxe anſwerd to hym in this manere / Certaynly my broder and my good Frend thow haſt brought to me ryght good tydynges / wherof more than C tymes I ſhalle thanke the / And ſayenge theſe wordes the Cock lyfte vp his neck / and his feet / and loked farre fro hym / And the foxe ſayd to hym / what godſep / where aboute lokeſt thow / And the Cok anſwerd to hym / Certaynly my broder I ſee two dogges ſtrongly and lyghtly rennynge hytherward with open mouthes / whiche as I ſuppoſe come for to brynge to vs the tydynges whiche thou haſt told to vs / And thenne the Foxe whiche ſhoke for fere of the two dogges ſayd to the Cock / god be with you my frend / It is tyme that I departe fro hens / or

theſe two dogges come nerer / And ſayinge theſe wordes toke his waye / & ranne as faſt as he myght / And thenne the cock demaunded and cryed after hym / godſep / why renneſt thow thus / yf the ſayd pacte is accorded / thow oughteſt not to doubte no thynge Ha a godſep ſayd the Foxe from ferre / I doubte that theſe two dogges haue not herd the decreet of the pees / And thus whanne a begyler is begyled / he receyued the ſallary or payement / whiche he ought to haue / wherfore lete euery man kepe hym ſelf ther fro

POgius reherceth that there were two wymmen in Rome / whiche he knewe of dyuerſe age and forme / which came to a Curteyzan by cauſe to haue and wynne ſomwhat wyth theyr bodyes / whome he receyued and happed that he knewe the fayreſt of bothe twyes / and that other ones / and ſoo departed / And afterward whanne they ſhold departe / he gaf to them a pyece of lynen clothe / not decernynge how moche eche of them ſhold haue to her parte and porcion / And in the partynge of the ſayd clothe fylle bitwene the wymmen a ſtryf by cauſe

cauſe one of them demaunded two partes after thexygence of her werke / And that other the half after theyre perſones / eche of them ſhewynge dyuerſly theyr reſons / that one ſayeng that ſhe hadde ſuffred hym twyes to doo his pleaſyr / and that other pretended / that ſhe was redy and in her was no defawte And ſoo fro wordes they came to ſtrokes and cratchyng with naylys / and drawynge theyr here / in ſo moche that theyr neyghbours came to this batayll for to departe them / And alſo of theyr owne and propre huſbondes / not knowynge the cauſe of theyr ſtryf and debate / eche of them defendynge his wyues cauſe / And fro the fyghtynge of the wymmen hit aroos and came to theyr huſbondes with buffettis and caſtynge of ſtones / ſoo longe that men ranne bytwene them / And after the cuſtomme of Rome bothe the huſbondes were brought to pryſon berynge enemyte eche to other / & knewe no thynge the cauſe wherfore / The ſayd cloth is ſette in the handes of the wymen ſecretely yet not departed / but is ſecretely argued amonge the wymmen in what wyſe that this mater ſhal be denyded / And I demaunde of doctoures what the lawe is of it

¶ He ſayeth alſo that a marchaunt of Florence bought an hors of a man / and made his couenaunt with

with the ſellar for xxv ducattes for to paye forthwith in hande xv ducattes / And as for the reſt he ſhold abyde dettour and owe / And the ſellar was content / and therupon delyuerd the hors and receyued the xv ducattes / After this a certayne terme the ſellar demaunded of the byar the reſydue / And he denyed the payment / & had hym hold his couenant / For the byer ſayd we were accorded that I ſhold be thy debtour / And yf I ſhold ſatyſfye and paye the I ſhold nomore be thy dettour / et cetera / and ſoo he abode dettour

HE telleth alſo that ther was a carryk of Jene hyred in to frauce for to make warre ayenſt engliſſhmen / of the whiche caarrick the patrone bare in his ſheld painted an oxe hede / whiche a noble man of frauce beheld and ſawe / & ſayd he wold auenge hym on hym that bare tho armes / wherupon aroos an altercacion ſo moche / that the frenſſhman prouoked the Janueye to bataylle and fyght therfore / The Januey acceptyd the prouocacion / & came at the day aſſigned in to the felde withoute ony araye or habyllements of warre / And that other frenſſhe man came in moche noble apparayll in to the feld that was ordeyned / & thēne the patrone of the carrik ſaid wherfore is it that we two ſhold this day fyght & make bataill fore I ſaye ſaid that other that thyn armes ben myn / & bylonged to me to fore that thow haldeſt them / Thenne the Januey ſaid It is no nede to make ony bataylle therfore / For the armes that I bere is not the hede of an oxe but it is the hede of a cowe whiche thynge ſo ſpoken the noble Frenſſhe man was abaſſhed and ſo departed half mocqued

Also he saith that ther was a phisycyen dwellyng in a Cyte / whiche was a grete & a connyng man in that scyence / & he had a seruaūt a yong man whiche made pylles after a certayne forme that he shewed to hym / & whan this yong man / had dwellid long with hym / & coude parfytly make the pylles / he departed fro his mayster / and went in to straūge countre where as he was knowen / and lete men there to vnderstonde that he was a connynge phisycyen / and coude gyue medycynes for al maner maladyes and sekenesses / and myniſtyred alwey his pylles to euery man that came to hym for ony remedy / And hit was soo that a poure man of that place where he was came to hym / and complayned how he had loste his asse / and prayd hym to gyue to hym a medycyne for to synde his asse ageyne / And he gaf to hym the sayd pylles / & badde hym to receyue and take them / And he shold synde his asse / And this poure man dyd soo / and after wente in to the feldes and pastures to seke and loke after his asse / And soo doynge the pylleys wrongth soo in his bely / that he must nedes go purge hym / and went amonge

amonge the reed and there eaſyd hym / And anonet here he fonde his aſſe / wherof he beyng moche ſoyeful ranne in to the toune / and told and proclamed / that by the medecyn that he had receyued of the phiſycyen he had found his aſſe / whiche thynge knowen alle the ſymple peple reputed hym for a moche connynge man / whiche coude no thynge doo but make pyllyes / And thus many fooles are ofte taken for wyſe and connynge / For he was reputed to hele all maner ſekeneſſes / and alſo to fynde aſſes.

THere was in a certayne towne a wydower wowed a wydowe for to haue and Wedde her to his wyf / And at the laſt they were agreed and ſured to gyder / ¶ And whan a yonge woman beynge ſeruaunt with the wydowe herd therof / ſhe came to her mayſtreſſe / and ſayd to her / Allas mayſtreſſe what haue ye doo / why ſayd ſhe / I haue herd ſay ſayd the mayde / that ye be aſſured and ſhalle wedde ſuche a man / And what thenne ſayd the wydowe / Allas ſayd the mayde I am ſory for yow / by cauſe I haue herd ſaye that he is a peryllous man / For he laye ſo ofte and knewe

ſo

ſo moch his other wyf that ſhe deyde therof / And I am ſory therof / that yf ye ſhold falle in lyke caas / to whome the wydowe anſwerd and ſayd / Forſothe I wold be dede / For ther is but ſorowe and care in this world / This was a curteys excuſe of a wydowe

NOw thenne I wylle fynyſſhe alle theſe fables wyth this tale that foloweth whiche a worſhipful preeſt and a parſone told me late / he ſayd / that there were duellynge in Oxenford two preſtes bothe mayſtres of arte / of whome that one was quyck and coude putte hym ſelf forth / And that other was a good ſymple preeſt / And ſoo it happed that the mayſter that was perte and quyck was anone promoted to a benefyce or tweyne / and after to prebendys / and for to be a Dene of a grete prynces chappel / ſuppoſynge and wenynge that his felaw the ſymple preeſt ſhold neuer haue be promoted but be alwaye an Annuel / or at the moſt a paryſſhe preeſt / So after longe tyme that this worſhipful man this dene came rydynge in to a good paryſſh with a x or xij horſes / lyke a prelate / and came in to the chirche of the ſayd paryſſhe / and fond there this good ſymple man

ſomtyme

ſomtyme his felawe / whiche cam and welcomed hym lowely / And that other badde hym good morowe mayſter Johan / and toke hym fleyghtly by the hand / and axyd hym where he dwellyd / And the good man ſayd in this paryſſh / how ſayd he / are ye here a ſowle preeſt or a paryſſh preſte / nay ſyr ſaid he / for lack of a better though I be not able ne worthy I am parſon and curate of this paryſſhe / and thenne that other aualed his bonet and ſaid mayſter parſon I praye yow to be not deſpleaſyd / I had ſuppoſed ye had not be benefyced / But mayſter ſayd he / I pray yow what is this benfyce worth to yow a yere / Forſothe ſayd the good ſymple man / I wote neuer / for I make neuer accomptes thereof / how wel I haue had hit four or fyue yere / And knowe ye not ſaid he what it is worth / it ſhold ſeme a good benefyce / no Forſothe ſayd he / But I wote wel what it ſhalle be worth to me / Why ſayd he / what ſhalle hit be worth / Forſothe ſayd he / yf I doo my trewe dylygẽce in the cure of my paryſſhes in prechyng and techynge / and doo my parte longynge to my cure / I ſhalle haue heuen therfore / And yf theyre ſowles ben loſt or ony of them by my defawte / I ſhall be punyſihed therfore / And herof am I ſure / And with that word the ryche dene was abaſſhed And thought he ſhold be the better /

better / And take more hede to his cures and benefyces than he had done / This was a good anſwere of a good preeſt and an honeſt /

And here with I fynyſſhe this book / tranſlated & emprynted by me William Caxton at Weſtmynſter in thabbey / and fynyſſhed the xxvj daye of Marche the yere of oure lord M CCCC lxxxiij / And the fyrſt yere of the regne of Kyng Rychard the thyrde.

ERRATA.

Those in Gothic are in the original Caxton.

Page.	Line.		
6	11	Teeeth/ Theune,	teeth / Thenne.
22	4	audueyte,	audacyte.
29	12	gunnes,	gynnes.
35	7	nygt,	nyȝt.
47	12	conenaunces,	conuenaunces.
54	20	double,	doubte.
58	9	rygte,	ryȝte.
74	1	Seventh,	vȝ.
92	8	grede,	grete.
102	17	eyylle,	euylle.
103	10	folowith,	ȝoloweth.
105	18	beaulte,	beaute.
111		No heading.	
112	20	enhauced,	enhaunced.
115	16	alſo,	alſo.
,,	21	mone,	
116	17	ypocytes,	ypocrytes.
117	13	vysyded,	vysyted.
119	2	eyylle,	euylle.
120	3	behodeth,	behoueth.
120	12	thyn conuenynt,	thynconuenyent.
128	22	uf,	yf.
138	1	knygtt,	knyght.
,,	25	fend,	and.
145	5	raynfull,	ravnfail.
198	7	thexcuſacions,	thexcuſacions.
204	15	eyylle,	euylle.
215	15	than dyd,	then hyt dyd.
221	3	be be,	he.
232	4	sommen of a,	som men of a.
234	12	and bydeth,	*omit* and.
238	24	ppsscssour,	poſſeſſour.
241	21	ond,	and.
246	17	And And,	And
,,	22	lasse,	lesse.
247	22	inhance,	enhaūce.
248	16	sacryfyed,	ſacryfyſed.
251	13	Arabe,	a Rabe.
266	5	the,	thre.
276	3	wgiche,	whiche.
277	2	seckynge,	seckynge.
286	9	euyelle,	euylle.
313	8	partzly,	parfizily.
,,	23	wrongth,	wrought.

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BOMBAY BRANCH
JACKSON
MEMORIAL
COLLECTION
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Ballantyne Press : Edinburgh and London

00087107

Digitized with financial assistance from
Hermès India
a project facilitated by the Rotary Club of Bombay
on 10 August, 2018